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**LINGUISTIC SPECULATIONS  
OF THE HINDUS**

BEING THE FIRST PART OF A THESIS ON THE  
PHILOSOPHY OF SANSKRIT GRAMMAR

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# Linguistic Speculations of the Hindus

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## INTRODUCTION

Speculations on grammar naturally presuppose the existence of language; and the relation in which the study of a language stands to that of its grammatical system is one of interdependence. Based as it is on the strictly scientific method of generalisation and particularisation on the one hand, and that of agreement and difference on the other, Sanskrit grammar may be viewed as throwing much light upon problems of philology. Moreover, the rules of Sanskrit grammar, as they unfold the laws that regulate the growth, formation and correctness of recognised linguistic forms, are in themselves short formulæ of the science of language. Again, the rules, such as परः सन्निकर्षः संहिता (Pāṇ. 1. 4. 109), अकः सवर्णः दीर्घः (Pāṇ. 6. 1. 101), which virtually show the tendency of two vowels having close proximity and homogeneity to lengthening, are as much phonological as grammatical. There was, moreover, a period in the development of the Sanskrit language when, in the absence of such technical devices of grammar, Samāsa had to be determined by different modulations of voice. The division of स्वरः into उदात्तः, अनुदात्तः, and स्वरितः, the transformations of sounds as are illustrated by the rules of संप्रसारणम्, and the principles of euphonic combinations, are indications how intimately grammar is related to phonology. Again, what frequently engross our attention in connection with the investigation of

language, and the methodology of grammar, are the problems of Semantics which, as a cognate science, deal with the psychological aspects of language. 'The science of meaning,' though of comparatively modern growth in the domain of western philological research, had already developed into a scientific branch of study at the hands of the Nairuktas or etymologists.<sup>1</sup> The antecedency of ideas to words,<sup>2</sup> the relation between the sign and the object signified,<sup>3</sup> the derivability of words from roots, the method of naming objects, and the principle of meaning-change, are facts that were scientifically dealt with by the Nairuktas and grammarians. The etymological explanations of words, as they occur in the Brāhmaṇa and Nirukta literature, give an indication that studies in the science of meaning were not only considered essential for the proper understanding of the Vedic texts, but formed an important part of Sanskrit learning. Though an independent branch of study mainly devoted to the psychological side of language, the study of the Nirukta, as Yāska maintains, is materially akin to that of grammar,<sup>4</sup> since the former serves as the complement to the latter. The speculations on grammar being thus organically related to those of Philology and Semantics as such, and as the path traversed by them being almost the same, we propose to sketch in the Introduction to the 'Philosophy of Sanskrit Grammar' some general outlines of Hindu Philology and Semantics.

<sup>1</sup> अर्थमन्वयः शब्दप्रयोगः । अर्थं संप्रत्याययिष्यामीति शब्दः प्रयुज्यते ।—Māhābhāṣya, ed. Kielhorn, Vol. II, p. 15.

सर्वोक्तिः शब्दोऽर्थप्रत्ययमार्थं प्रयुज्यते—Tantra-vār., under 1.3.8.

<sup>2</sup> चीनपणिकस्तु शब्दस्यार्थेन सन्वयः etc.—Mīmāṃsā Sūtra, 1.1.5.

निबोध्यैवैवामर्थैः समन्वयः—Mahābhāṣya, ed. Kielhorn, Vol. I, p. 7.

<sup>3</sup> नामान्वाख्यानमनेति शाकटायनो नेरुक्तसमयश्च—Yāska's Nirukta, 1.12. (Bom. ed., p. 99).

<sup>4</sup> तदिदं विद्यास्थानं व्याकरणस्य कार्त्तव्यं स्वार्थमाधकं च—Yāska's Nir., Bom. ed., Vol. I, p. 115.

The early monuments of Sanskrit literature bear ample evidence to the fact that studies in the science of language, as in various other departments of culture, had engaged the keen attention of the Indian thinkers at a very early period; and the amount of success they attained in this particular branch of study cannot be overestimated. Whatever may be the views of scholars regarding the antiquity of the Sanskrit language, we can reasonably assume that the power of speech (Vāk), often personified as a goddess 'वाग्देवी,' was not unknown to the Vedic seers who seem to have been lavish in their laudation of Vāk. On the assumption of a hypothetical parent-tongue one may dispute the claim of Sanskrit to be regarded as the oldest of all tongues, but there is no reason to doubt that it is the oldest of all *living* languages, and that scientific speculation on language first originated in India. ;

Sanskrit, though no longer a spoken tongue, has got such a vast stock of words on the one hand, and such comprehensive systems of grammar and phonology on the other, that a comparative study of this language along with Greek and Latin laid down the foundation of the science of 'Comparative Philology' in the western world. 'The discovery of Sanskrit,' says Sir R. G. Bhāṇḍarkar,<sup>1</sup> 'and the Indian grammatical systems at the close of the last century led to a total revolution in the philological ideas of Europeans.' It is gratifying to find that early Indian speculators on language, though their linguistic survey was confined to one tongue, had succeeded in making accurate observations on language and giving them a strictly scientific character. It is not an exaggeration to say that the references to Vāk, found in the earlier and later Vedic

<sup>1</sup> 'Wilson Philological Lectures,' p. 5



literature, in passages like the following, "Devas created speech which is spoken by all animals,"<sup>1</sup> "there are as many words as there are manifestations of all-pervading Brahma,"<sup>2</sup> "speech was invented for the performance of sacrifice,"<sup>3</sup> "speech was originally undivided into parts,"<sup>4</sup> "speech is the rope, names the knots,"<sup>5</sup> "speech is eternal,"<sup>6</sup> "the fourth form of speech is current among men,"<sup>7</sup> "the world originated from Vāk (logos),"<sup>8</sup> "the word 'Kāka' is an instance of the imitation of sounds,"<sup>9</sup> "the use of words represents the easiest way of expressing ideas and naming objects,"<sup>10</sup> and "all words are derivable from roots,"<sup>11</sup>—are almost scientifically correct and represent, so to speak the earliest speculations on language ever made in any part of the world.

No literary records have possibly been preserved either in Babylonia or Greece that are older than the Vedic literature, and contain traces of more accurate observations on language than those to be found in the early Vedic literature. Here and there we find many passages in Sanskrit which have practically a philological bearing and serve to give us more valuable knowledge of the linguistic science than the works of early Greek thinkers. But what we actually lack there

<sup>1</sup> 'दीर्घो वाचमजनयत्; दीवानां विश्वरवाः पश्यन्ते वदन्ति.'—Rigveda, 6.7.5.

<sup>2</sup> 'सहस्रं यावत् ब्रह्मविष्टं तावती वाक्.'—Rigveda, 10. 10. 2. 8.

<sup>3</sup> 'इयमिवाचं जनयन् यजध्वे.'—Rigveda, 4. 2. 11. 5.

<sup>4</sup> 'यजन् वाचः पदबोधमायत्नामन्वविन्दन् प्रियुप्रविष्टम्.'—Rig., 10. 71. 3.

<sup>5</sup> 'वशिष्टासः पितृवत् वाचमकृत etc.'—Rigveda, 10. 5. 6. 14.

<sup>6</sup> 'वागे पराव्याहतावदनेर्देवा इन्द्रममृवन्.'—Tait. Sam. VI. 4. 7.

<sup>7</sup> 'वाकतन्निर्गामानि दामानि.'—Ait. Aranyaka, 2. 1. 6. B. Ind., p. 63.

<sup>8</sup> 'वाचा विरुपन्मिया.'—Rigveda, 8. 8. 66.

<sup>9</sup> 'तृतीयं वाचो मनुष्या वदन्ति.'—Rigveda, 2. 3. 22. 5.

<sup>10</sup> 'वागेव विश्वामुवन्ति जज्ञे.'—Quoted by Panyarāja under Vākyapadīya. Kārikā, 121. p. 45, Ben. ed. [ed., p. 316.]

<sup>11</sup> 'काक इति शब्दानुक्तितदिदंशकुनिषु बहुलम्.'—Yās. Nirukta, VII. IV. I. Bom.

<sup>12</sup> 'अथोयत्ताश्चशब्देनसञ्ज्ञाकरणं व्यवहारार्थं लोके.'—Nirukta, 1. 1. 2. p. 44, Bom. ed.

<sup>13</sup> 'नामान्याख्यातज्ञानीति.'—Nirukta, 1. 12, Bom. ed., p. 99.

is a systematic study of language on a comparative method. As regards the question of time or priority, we know of no European thinker who, far from being anterior to the Vedic seers of respectable antiquity, might even be placed before Yāska whose work is a conspicuous sign of the scientific development of Sanskrit Philology. This being the actual state of things, we can hardly make out what led Prof. Sayce<sup>1</sup> to assert in bold terms that it was not in India but in Babylonia and Greece that the first attempt had been made to solve the problems of language. The contribution made by Sanskrit literature to the philosophy of language is really valuable, and, in the words of Sir R. G. Bhandarkar, 'India may justly claim to be the original home of scientific philology.' It will suffice here to say that the Sanskrit passages which speak of 'fourfold' division of speech,<sup>2</sup> 'Vāk' as string, and names as knots,<sup>3</sup> and of 'speech' as the materialisation of internal consciousness,<sup>4</sup> are, in no way, posterior to the linguistic speculations of Heraclitus and Democritus. Yāska, who flourished at least a century earlier than Plato, and who was undoubtedly preceded by good many etymologists, and grammarians, had already divided speech into four parts, had strictly adhered to the doctrine of derivability of words from roots,<sup>5</sup> and distinguished verbal roots from prefixes and suffixes. Though the works of earlier etymologists who founded their schools like the grammarians have been lost, and we have access only to one of

<sup>1</sup> Intro. to the Science of Language by Prof. Sayce. Vol. I. pp. 3 and 5.

<sup>2</sup> Wilson Philological Lectures, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> चत्वारिवाक् परिमितापदानि.—Rigveda, 2. 3. 22-5.

<sup>4</sup> Ait. Aran., 2. 1. 6.

<sup>5</sup> मन्त्रासर्थेनापविभक्तवद्वष्टिकाः वाचमभिश्चन्दमानाम्.—Śruti quoted by Panyarāja. Vāk. Karika, 1.—यच्च धारा मनसा वाचमकृत.—Rigveda, X, 71. 2.

<sup>6</sup> चत्वारि पदज्ञानानि नामाख्यातःपमर्शनिपाताश्च. Nir., 1. 1. p. 24.

them, yet we do not fail to notice the scientific accuracy of Indian speculations on language. Examples may be multiplied to show that speculations with regard to the science of language had their origin in India in that remote period of the Vedic literature when the 'Pada-pātha' texts, on a purely grammatical line, had been arranged by Śākalya and numerous treatises on Phonology (Prātisākhya), Etymology (Nirukta) and grammar had come into existence with the supreme necessity of facilitating the Vedic studies. It was, of course, at the hands of Pāṇini, Patanjali and Bhartrihari in a later period that studies in the science of language, specially in the philosophy of grammar, seem to have received a systematic development.

Much has been done by European scholars in the domain of linguistic researches: they have based their speculations on a comparative method and carefully systematised the materials gathered from a study of the conspicuous languages of the so-called Indo-European family. Their achievement, judged by the scientific standard, is indeed great. But, to speak the truth, very little has been spoken of the Indian logico-grammarians whose observations on the philosophy of language are calculated to be of no less scientific value. We shall not be far from truth if we say that Indian linguists have not really been given the prominence which they rightly deserve in consideration of the antiquity of their speculations and the cogency of their arguments. It is quite manifest from what we have already said that Indian speculations on language might be placed at the head of all linguistic dissertations of the world. In the following pages an attempt will be made to find out the materials upon which the structure of 'Hindu Philology' is to be built.

## PART I

### Philosophy of Language

#### VĀK—ITS ORIGIN AND ETERNAL CHARACTER

In the first part of this thesis we propose to deal with the Philosophy of the Sanskrit Language and set forth the general features of the tongue from both physical and psychological standpoints. The short space at our disposal will not, however, permit us to give here a comprehensive analysis of all the texts that have either a direct or indirect bearing upon the problems of language. The dominant idea we have kept in view is to show that speculations on languages are not entirely the product of intellectual activity of the west, and the fruitful result of scientific studies of languages, as undertaken by the present generation of scholars, but India has reason to be proud of having largely contributed in a much earlier age to the general knowledge of the linguistic science in its manifold aspects.

The sacred language of the Indo-Aryans (subsequently known by the popular appellation **संस्कृत**)  
Divine origin is spoken of in the Rig Veda as a  
'Divine speech' created by the gods for the use of all animals in their respective fashions. Whether speech was given to man as a divine gift or acquired by him through imitation, belief regarding its divine origin steadily gained ground, even in later times, and we find Dandin<sup>1</sup> and Bhartrihari<sup>2</sup> eulogising Sanskrit as a 'Divine tongue.' The mysticism underlying the phenomenon of speech

<sup>1</sup> संस्कृत नाम देवा वाक्—Kāvya-larṇā. I, 33.

<sup>2</sup> देवावाक्यवकीर्तयम्—Vāk.pād., I, 156 (Ben. ed.).

does not usually excite our wonder. Scarcely it becomes a burden of thought as to how we learn to speak or how the manifestation of internal ideas takes place through the medium of audible sound. But when we consider the magnitude of what has been said on the origin of speech by Indian thinkers, we are almost forced to appreciate the width of vision with which they sought to trace the ultimate origin of Vāk as well as the depth and importance of the subject itself. The germs of speech seem to have been implanted to human nature by some divine agency; men do not create speech but serve only to manifest it by the exercise of their vocal organs. The power of articulating sound, as a divine or natural gift granted to men, serves to distinguish men from other animals. Moreover, the designation 'गोर्वाणवाणो,' as often applied to Sanskrit, purports to show the sacredness of Sanskrit as being the language of gods. The credit of developing a highly efficient means of communication as speech (Vāk) might therefore be ascribed to gods from whom men got it. It may be further held that the world of speech (वाक्मय-जगत्) represents the audible manifestation of that unseen power which permeates the entire existence. To bring in the idea of God for explaining the origin of language is not altogether obsolete, for we hear of a group of scholars in Steinthal's linguistic discourses who advanced arguments in support of the 'Divine Origin' of language. Vāk is again said to have originated for the performance of sacrifice. The first and foremost thing necessary for the performance of sacrifice was the recitation of mantras, and as it was through the medium of speech (as opposed to gesture) that the priests had to offer their prayers to gods, the importance of Vāk was early conceived by the Vedic seers. Pranava, as a symbol of or virtually identical with Brahma, is spoken of as the

ultimate source of Vāk (ॐकारमेवेदं सर्वम्).<sup>1</sup> To this primordial sound is attributed the origin of the entire world of speech. It is mysterious how all words are capable of being reduced to such a single syllable as *pranava*, and it necessarily requires a good deal of meditation to realise a phenomenon like this.

Rightly or wrongly, most of the Hindu teachers have spoken of their traditionally sacred tongue as 'Nitya'<sup>2</sup> (eternal), or more properly, 'Pravāhanitya'<sup>3</sup> (current from time immemorial). In the *Rig Veda* we first meet with the expression 'वाचाविरूपनित्यया' which assigns eternity to Vāk. When Brahman is held to be identical with words,<sup>4</sup> as we have already alluded to, it is no wonder that Vāk should merit the same attributes as are popularly assigned to Brahman. This view, however inconsistent with the accepted theory, was not without its effects. The entire school of *Mīmāṃsā* philosophy is based upon the doctrine of eternity of sound. To maintain the non-human origin of the Vedas, the *Mīmāṃsakas* had no other alternative than to strongly advocate the eternal character of sound. The non-eternal view of Vāk, as is held by *Audambarāyana*,<sup>5</sup> found absolutely no support at the hands of etymologists and

<sup>1</sup> 'सर्वावाचोवेदमनुप्रविष्टा' and 'स (प्रणवः) हि सर्वशब्दार्थप्रकृतिः'—Vākpad. Kārikā, 1. 10.

<sup>2</sup> 'वाचैशायवै'—Chhāṇ. Upan. 3. 12, Bom. ed.

<sup>3</sup> 'नित्यशब्दः'—*Maḍ-Ābhāṣya*, Vol. I, p. 18 (Keil. ed.).

<sup>4</sup> 'सिद्धम् नित्यशब्दत्वात्'—*Vār. Mahā*, Vol. I, p. 257.

<sup>5</sup> 'कार्यशब्दिकानामपि मने प्रवाहनित्यशब्दार्थस्यापि...नित्यत्वम्.—Kaiyata on "सिद्धे-  
शब्दार्थसम्बन्धे

प्रवाह नित्यया शब्दात् सदेव प्रतीतेः—Punyarāja on Vāk. ka. 3. 2.

<sup>6</sup> 'ब्रह्मं शब्दनिर्माणशब्दशक्तिनिवन्धनम्'—Punyarāja on Vākya padhya-  
karikā, I.

<sup>7</sup> 'नित्यम् आत् दशमस्य परार्थत्वात्.—*Mim. Sūtra*, 1. 1. 18.

तस्मात् वेदप्रमाणार्थं नित्यत्वमिह साध्यते.—*Sloka-vār* on *Mim. Sūtra*, 1. 1. 6.

<sup>8</sup> इन्द्रियमित्यं वचनं श्रीदुम्भरायणः—*Yāska Nir.* 1

grammarians. The Mīmāṃsakas, therefore, were not alone to lend support to such a view, since the grammarians, though in a different way, seem to have established the same truth by formulating the doctrine of 'Sphoṭa.' We can justify our remark by showing that the author of the Mahābhāṣya<sup>1</sup> has often applied to words such attributes as कूटस्थः, नित्यः, अविचाली, अविकारी, etc., which are all expressive of 'eternity.' What is really meant by holding language to be current from eternity is that its origin can hardly be definitely traced back to any particular period of the history of mankind, and that speech seems to be almost coëval with man. There is hardly any justification to believe the existence of such a human society in which men might be supposed to have been living in a state of absolute muteness. We may compare language to a living organism having both growth and decay; we may adhere to the doctrine of Evolution for affording us some clue as to the articulation of sound from gibberish of lower animals; and we may look upon language either as instinctive faculty or mechanical art acquired by men under pressure, but in all cases it will ever remain an enigmatic problem to ascertain the true origin of language. Gestures, onomatopoeia and interjectional cries may, as some philologists have pointed out, serve to explain the origin of a few words, but greater bulk of words, we must remember, would remain entirely inexplicable so far as their origin is concerned. As onomatopoeia is found to be applicable only to a very limited number of words, such as 'Kokila,' 'Kāka,' 'Dundubhi,' etc., we find it difficult to look upon the so-called 'Bow-wow' theory of Prof. Max Müller as throwing much light upon the origin of language.

<sup>1</sup> नित्याय शब्दाः नित्येषु च शब्देषु कूटस्थैरविचालिभिरविकारिभिरनित्यव्ययनपायीपञ्जनविकारिभिः.-  
Mahābhāṣya, Vol., I. p. 18.

Though he seems to have been conscious of the part played by the imitation of natural sound in the formation of language, Yāska holds that all words do not speak of the same origin<sup>1</sup>; and maintains, on the contrary, that words referred to above are also capable of being derived in a different way.<sup>2</sup> The inefficiency and insufficiency of gestures,<sup>3</sup> etc., as modes of expressions, have also been particularly observed by Yāska, since he states that in giving names to objects, words or articulate sounds are resorted to to the exclusion of physical movements on the scientific ground of their being most precise and comprehensive.

Language, whether existing from eternity or simply a conventional product of human efforts, is, according to the author of the Vākyapadiya, without beginning.<sup>4</sup> In the form of subtle sound ('नादः'), Vāk resides in the innermost part of human body and reveals itself through the instrumentality of vocal organs. 'There are, as we know, permanent word-records in the sub-conscious strata of the human mind.' They are manifested and not brought into existence by the act of uttering. That is to say, the production and disappearance or destruction of sound mean respectively manifestation and absence of operations on the part of vocal organs. This is, so to speak, the argument whereby the Mīmāṃsakas sought to refute the non-eternal view of words, as held by the Naiyāyikas (अमशब्देष्वनित्येषु ध्वनिषु—Śabdakhaṇḍa, Tattva-cintāmaṇi, p. 464, Bib. Ind. ed.). As regards the essence

<sup>1</sup> 'न शब्दाकृतिविद्यते इत्यौपमन्वयः'—Nir. III, 17, p. 51.

<sup>2</sup> 'काक उपकान्तिशतयो भवति'—Nir. III, 17, p. 316 (Bom. Ed.).

<sup>3</sup> 'अनाद्यस्त्वाशब्दस्य संज्ञाकरकस्य'—Durga has 'आमिसया अपि आमिसः; पाणिबिहारा ध्वनिकावाद्यः'—Nir., p. 51.

<sup>4</sup> 'नित्यत्वे कृतकत्वे वा तत्प्राप्तादिर्न विद्यते'—Vāk. I, 28, p. 15.

<sup>5</sup> Dr. Lakshman Sarup's Nirukta.



of Vāk, both Bhartṛhari<sup>1</sup> and Puṇyārāja hold that it is internal consciousness which finds expression through the medium of words, that is, in the use of words are reflected the mental ideas of the speaker. Vāk is, therefore, a means for the purpose of clothing thoughts. The subtle or psychological form of Vāk is held to be imperishable and consequently eternal. Here we find what is really meant by the Vedic text 'वाचा विरूपनिश्चया,' and Manu's assertion 'अनादिनिधनानिश्चा वागुत्पृष्टा स्वयम्भुवा.' The internal wind, to be more clear, gets material shape while passing through the vocal organs and is neither subject to production nor destruction in the true sense of the terms.

By word the Hindu grammarians meant sound which comes from within (तस्मात् ध्वनिः शब्दः). This sound which forms the outer garment of our inner thoughts becomes cognisable when it is usually capable of being expressed by letters (क्षतवर्णपरिग्रहा). All sounds do not, however, constitute language; sounds (apart from those that are produced by the beat of drum and the like) expressive of sense<sup>2</sup> come under the cognisance of linguistic studies as such. Later on will follow the discussion as to how sound and sense are inseparably associated with each other. The Chāndogya<sup>3</sup> Upaniṣad clearly states that the internal wind known as Vyāna, which represents a conjunction of Prāṇa (inhalation) and Apāna (exhalation), is the same as Vāk; and it is on

<sup>1</sup> अथेदमानः ज्ञानं सूक्ष्मवागनामस्थितम् । व्यक्तये रूपस्य शब्दत्वेन निवर्तते । -- Vākya-pādiya-kar., 1. 113.

प्रत्यकं चैतन्यस्मान्नः सृष्टिचित्तकं परबोधनाय शक्तिरभिप्रेत्यत इति । -- Puṇyārāja. Vāk. Kar., I.

एतावता ज्ञानमाशब्दत्वमिति बोध्यम्. — Com. on Manjushā. Kala. Vol. I, p. 190.

<sup>2</sup> प्रतीतपदार्थं को लोके ध्वनिः शब्द इत्युच्यते. — Mahābhāṣya. Vol. I, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> वाः प्राणापानयोः सन्धिः स व्यानी यो व्यानः सा वाक् तन्माहप्राणश्चानपानान्वाचमभिवाहति । — Chh. Up., 1. 3. Bom. ed., p. 32.

this account that at the time of speaking one is to refrain from both inhaling and exhaling. The same view regarding Vāk is also to be found in the Mahābhārata (प्राणायामान्तरि देवो धावते नित्यं हि तिष्ठति). Commenting on 'प्राणोवावप्येष्ठश्चोष्ठश्च,' etc., Ch. Up., 5.1, Śāṅkara observes that in point of time Prāṇa or vital force is older than Vāk, that is, in an embryo the vital force comes earlier than the faculty of speech which depends on the growth of sense-organs. That Prāṇa is superior to Vāk is shown by the fact that the dumb, though devoid of the power of speech, are not found unfit to live. Man does not, however, bring the faculty of speech into existence but only attempts to manifest the sounds that lie in undeveloped forms in some innermost part of his body. In tracing the ultimate origin of Vāk, the Śikṣās<sup>1</sup> also speak of internal wind as the creative factor. The soul, after ascertaining by intelligence the object to be communicated to others, engages mind to give expression to it, that is, to vocalise the thought rising within. Mind so appointed acts upon the internal physical fire which, again, moves the internal wind. Coming in touch with vocal organs, this internal wind assumes the form of words. This view with slight modifications is to be found in many Sanskrit works. To a Tāntrika, Vāk represents the audible potentiality of Śakti; every sound forms in itself the distinct manifestation of Nāda, and letters whereby sounds assume forms are called माह्वावर्णः. It is further stated that the operation of Nāda is continually going on, and that in every act of inhaling and exhaling we are unconsciously making two indistinct sounds, namely, हं and स. In the Vākya-padīya Bhartṛhari<sup>2</sup> has shown

<sup>1</sup> आत्मना ब्रह्मा दर्शयित्वा तं मनो युद्धं विवर्जयः मनः कायाग्निमाहन्ति स प्रवर्तते माह्वतम — *Śikṣa. Nirṇaya*, ed. 6.

<sup>2</sup> आनिमिद्विनी वायुः प्रवृत्तं प्रतिपद्यते : — *Vākya-pad.* 1. 109.

how internal wind reveals itself in the form of words; and has spoken of consciousness<sup>1</sup> and atoms<sup>2</sup> as life-giving constituents of words. To sum up what has been said in connection with the origin of language, we should say that there is almost no contention as regards the transformation of internal wind into the audible form of Vāk, and that this mystical process, though constantly at work, is almost imperceptible. As fire, says Bhartṛhari,<sup>3</sup> lies dormant in Arāṇi, so the germs of Vāk are latent in consciousness; and every act of uttering sound is only to manifest what is unmanifest (अव्यक्त).

Nāgeśa<sup>4</sup> has attempted to explain the origin of Vāk with reference to Cosmogony. After the annihilation of the cosmic world, he maintains, when the Supreme Being felt the necessity of creating this universe, His potentiality took the form of an 'atom'—a combination of three Guṇas. This is in reality an inexhaustible stock of energy. The unconscious part (inertia) is known to be बीजम् (seed), the part representing a mixture of both inertia and consciousness is called Nāda (sound), and the intelligent element goes by the name of Vindu. This Nāda, regarded as the ultimate source of all forms of Vāk (Parā, Paśyantī, Madhymā, and Vaikharī), is what is known as 'Śabda-Brahma.' The Tāntrika conceptions, as we find in the Sāradātilaka, have striking concurrence with this view.

<sup>1</sup> आह्नितपरीपाकायां ब्रह्मी शब्दोऽवधार्यते.—Vāk. 1. 85; and शब्दः प्राचाधिष्ठानो ब्रह्माधिष्ठानयः।

<sup>2</sup> अथर्वः सर्वशक्तिवात् भेदमसंग्रहणयः—Vāk. 1. 111.

<sup>3</sup> अरणिस्थं यथा ज्योतिः प्रकाशान्तराकारणम्—Vāk. 1. 46.

<sup>4</sup> ततः परमेश्वरस्य सिद्ध्यादिमकामायाह्नितजायते। ततो विन्दुरपमन्यकं विगुणं जायते। इदमेव शक्तितत्त्वम्। तस्य विन्दोरविदंशो बीजम्, etc.—Vaiyākaraṇa-siddhānta-manjuhā, p. 171.

The grammarians, it must be borne in mind, have, however, admitted the existence of Sphoṭa,<sup>1</sup> as distinguished from sound whereby it is materialised into word. It is indivisible into parts, formless, and not at all subject to production or destruction. It is pure consciousness that has neither beginning nor end. Of two-fold division of words,<sup>2</sup> namely, permanent and produced, it is the permanent or eternal that is represented by Sphoṭa. It is called स्फोटः, because the meaning is ultimately expressed by it. The grammarians have ascribed expressiveness to 'Sphoṭa' alone (वाचकता स्फोटैकनिष्ठा) and have unhesitatingly identified it with Brahma.<sup>3</sup> The Vākyapadiya begins with this bold assumption and states further that world proceeded from Śabda-Brahma,<sup>4</sup> just in the same way as meaning follows from word. It will not be out of place to mention here that the doctrine of Sphoṭa, as expounded by the Hindu grammarians, marks one of the novel features of grammar, considered as a system of Philosophy. The identification of words with Brahman, as is established by the Hindu grammarians, is likely to be questioned by modern philologists, since a thin veil of mysticism hangs over the entire speculation. The author of the Śabda-kaustubha<sup>5</sup> rightly observes that as one is said to have found the much coveted Chintāmaṇi in his search after a missing cow, so the grammarians, while discussing the real origin of Vāk, have found Brahman as Vāk *par excellence*.

<sup>1</sup> Vide Vār. Kārika, 1. 94. l. 103.

<sup>2</sup> इदं वा शब्दा मानी निश्चः काश्चिद् --- Mahābhāṣya

<sup>3</sup> इत्थं निश्चयमात्रं यच्छब्दमन्तरं निरञ्जनम् । शब्दो वेदे चरं प्रादुर्भावे पृथगेत्यनेन मनः ।

Vaiyākaraṇa-bhūṣaṇa-Kār, 72 Bom. ed., p. 259; निश्चयं शब्दो वा स्फोटः ।

<sup>4</sup> 'चलादिनिधनं ब्रह्म शब्दमन्तरं यद्वचस्म । विवर्तनेऽर्थभाविन प्रक्रिया जगती यतः'—Vākyapadiya, Kār I; and शब्दस्य परिवर्तनोऽयमिदंवाच्यविदो विदुः ।—Vāk. 1. 121.

<sup>5</sup> बराटिकान्ते वचसाय प्रकृतः चिन्तामणिं लब्धवानिति etc.

With a vision so penetrating and far-reaching the Hindu grammarians could not look upon words, as merely phonetic labels arbitrarily assigned to objects but found in Vāk the audible manifestation of all-pervading Brahma. Vāk, taken in its psychological aspect, is not of human invention; it forms the most essential potentiality of men, as it differentiates them from brutal creation. Vāk is held to be eternal, in as much as the internal wind residing in the Mūlādhāra (inexhaustible reservoir of sound) is said to have perpetual existence. Having discussed many points as to the precise nature of words, Patañjali concludes that word is the same as sound (ध्वनिः शब्दः). We should not, however, lose sight of the fact that this applies to 'कार्यशब्दः,' as opposed to 'नित्यशब्दः,' and never confound sound with 'Sphoṭa' or Nāda, that is to say, effect with cause. From what has been said above we are convinced that we can proceed a step further and hold that sound, as a quality of ether (शब्दगुणसाकाशम्), is the product of internal wind which has its origin in subtle word-form -- 'Nāda.'

It may be asked here as to what we are driving at and what light is really thrown by these references on the origin of language proper. Our answer *prima facie* is that the origin of language is nothing but a vague problem of modern philology, and that it has become almost a fashion with students of philology to deal with this question with much ingenuity. To trace the origin of language is as difficult as to ascertain the dawn of human intellect. And as sound is only an outward garment of thought, the history of language should necessarily be the history of human thought. The psychological origin of language, as already pointed out, may be thus substantiated by facts of common experience. Every material object, when struck, produces sound peculiar to itself. In the same way when mind acts upon internal fire

( मन्त्रावागमिमाहन्ति ) in order to give expression to thought, subtle forms of sound are readily generated in the vibrating sphere of internal region. Now it is almost clear that what has been said in the foregoing pages refers more to the internal or psychological than to the external forms of language. We have, moreover, alluded to the view of Yāska as to why the use of words is preferable to gesture as a means of expressing thought, and have shown the apparent insufficiency of the so-called 'Bow-Wow' theory, as a perfect explanation of the origin of language. We may in a like manner reject the theory of interjection, if it unduly claims to be the only explanation regarding the creation of language, for only a few words like अहो, वत, आ, अहह, etc., might be traced to emotional cries, while the vast majority of words would show no sign of interjectional origin in themselves. We give below, for the sake of clearness, short accounts of the different views that were held by Indian philosophers regarding the origin of language : -

We have at the very outset referred to the Vedic hymns which speak of Vāk as a creation of God. According to this view, language, though spoken by men, does not betray any trace of human invention : it is a divine gift, and not an achievement of which man has any reason to be proud. It was possibly to distinguish man from brutal creation that the faculty of speech as well as the power of articulating sound had been implanted in him. Manu says that it was the supreme Self-born Being ( स्वयम्भुः ) who created Vāk. The Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad<sup>1</sup> ascribes the origin of four Vedas to the breath of the 'Eternal Being.' Again, we hear that the primordial sound 'Praṇava,' involuntarily uttered by Brahma, is the ultimate source of all diversified forms of Vāk.

<sup>1</sup> अहं मङ्गली भूतम् निश्चितमेतद् यद्व्यं दः, etc.

The sacred character of the Sanskrit language is, however, due to the belief, current among orthodox scholars, that it is the language of gods.

To the Mīmāṃsakas, language, as an expression of thought, is existing from eternity, its origin being independent of human invention. Man does not practically create language, but only manifests by the operation of vocal organs what lie dormant in some innermost recesses of his body. The question of production and destruction, as suggested by the Naiyāyikas, does not really apply to sound as such ; and consequently it is more proper to use the expressions 'manifestation' and 'absence or cessation of exciting causes' instead of those two terms. The epithet अपौरुषेयः might, therefore, be applied to words which represent the Vedas ( मन्त्रब्राह्मणात्मकशब्दराशिर्वेदः—Sāyana). The necessity of maintaining the eternity of words was almost forced upon the Mīmāṃsakas to establish the eternal character of the Vedas. They were not, however, satisfied with the formulation of this doctrine alone, but tried to establish the relation of word to significance as eternally fixed<sup>1</sup>—a fact without which the Vedas, looked upon as a store-house of all knowledge concerning 'Dharma' and 'Brahma,' would fall short of orthodox estimation ( धर्मब्रह्मणो वेदैकवेद्ये ).

In opposition to the views stated above, the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika schools of philosophy held language to be a creation of men. The operations of vocal organs are the

Conventional or  
non-eternal origin.

<sup>1</sup> In his translation of the Mīmāṃsā Sūtras and in the Introduction of the 'Slokavārtika,' the learned Prof. Dr. G. N. Jha has in a lucid but learned way discussed this topic with thoroughness, and has shewn the logical method of arguments whereby the discordant views of the Naiyāyikas are to be refuted.

<sup>2</sup> Mīm. Sūtra. 1. 1. 5.

immediate causes that give rise to sounds which are liable to disappearance just after their utterance. Words, as they exhibit two aspects invariably associated with evanescent objects, namely, production and destruction, are caused and not permanent (अनित्यत्वायं कारणतः Vai. Sū. 2. 2. 28). Having discussed all doubtful points as to whether word is a substance, action or quality, the Vaiśeṣikas sought to discard the theory of eternity of sound by such aphorisms as सतोलिङ्गाभावात्, 'नित्यवैधर्म्यात्, लिङ्गाच्चानित्यः शब्दः etc. Now it needs hardly be said that they took a more practical view of language which has striking coincidence with current opinions. Long before the many-sided development of modern science came to light, the Naiyāyikas, we are proud to say, had arrived at the scientifically accurate conclusion that 'Sound is a quality of ether,' i.e., sound is the resultant of ethereal vibrations (शब्दगुणमाकाशम्), and they might be credited with having founded the so-called 'Wave-theory' (वैचित्र्यरङ्गन्यायः).<sup>2</sup> Though they gave more prominence to the physical aspects of language and tried to free their linguistic views from all mystical conceptions, the Naiyāyikas, it must be remembered, could not entirely exclude the idea of 'Divine interference' in the phenomenon of language. The significance, specially the primary significance, of a word is not, the Naiyāyikas hold, dependent on popular usage or ordinary convention, but fixed by the will of God (ईश्वरेच्छा).<sup>3</sup> The characteristic feature of this doctrine is that meanings (शक्तिः) are said to have been assigned to words primarily by God, His volition being expressed in these terms: 'Let this word be denotative of this sense.'

<sup>1</sup> Vai. Sūtra. 2. 2. 23, 27, 32. (Candrakānta Tarkālaṅkāra's edition) pp. 66-71.

<sup>2</sup> वैचित्र्यरङ्गन्यायेन तदनुपनिमित्तं कीर्तिता—Bhāṣāpariccheda, Kār., 166

<sup>3</sup> सामयिकः शब्दादर्थं प्रत्ययः—Vai. Sūtra, 7. 2. 21



The grammarians have formulated the doctrine of 'Sphoṭa' as what refers to the real origin of all forms of speech. It is called 'Sphoṭa' because the meaning is ultimately expressed by it. The sound uttered by means of vocal organs should not be confounded with 'Sphoṭa'; it is only suggested by sound ( ध्वनिव्यङ्गाः ), but is not exactly identical with it. We can dissolve the word गौः into three component sounds, namely, ग, औ and विमर्गः, but we cannot do so with regard to 'Sphoṭa' which is incapable of being divided into parts, and is absolutely devoid of any order such as priority and posteriority and so forth ( अक्रमः ).<sup>1</sup> It is held to be perpetual, i.e., not liable to production and destruction. As a symbol of eternal consciousness, 'Sphoṭa,' though more spiritual than material, is regarded to be the real source of all words. The grammarians divided 'Sphoṭa' into eight different forms (which are ultimately reducible to one—वाक्यस्फोटः ), and carried their conception to such a height as to identify it finally with Brahman.

Though there is no distinct reference to the 'Root-theory' as such, the stand-point taken by 'Śākatāyana' as to the reducibility of words to verbal roots and which fully concurred with the basic principle of the 'Nairuktas,' might be put forward as sufficient evidence that this famous grammarian ( Śākatāyana ) as well as the etymologists in general had considered the entire structure of language to have been evolved from crude elements—roots. The fundamental principle underlying all etymological explanations is that all word-forms, looked at from an analytical point of view, are capable of being reduced to roots which admit of no further analysis. The roots,

<sup>1</sup> नादस्य क्रमनात्वाच्च पूर्वा नापरस्य सः । अक्रमः क्रमरूपेण भेदवानिव गृह्यते — Vāk. pad. 1 48.

like the atoms of the Vaiśeṣikas, are held to be permanent; they are significant by themselves, and form the germs to which all words may be traced. In combination with formative elements these roots have, however, undergone various modifications. One and the same root has given rise to numerous word-forms, of course, with difference of meanings. These roots, as the last result of linguistic analysis, are equally important to both grammarians and etymologists. They are mostly monosyllabic in form and generally signify 'action' ( *आपारः* ). We may, however, trace the influence of Onomatopoeia to the formation of a certain number of roots, such as *गर्द, मर्द, मर्ज, मृ, गद्, पत्*, etc., and maintain that the imitation of natural sounds played an important part in the origination of roots. That Yāska made more than one reference to Onomatopoeia has already been alluded to.

Before we close this discourse we would like to say a few words more. The view of Śakātāyana and Hindu etymologists, though strongly opposed by Gārgya and some of the grammarians, is also important as showing the possibility, if we are allowed to say so, of our conceiving a crude and infantile stage of language, such as is represented by roots. If the entire stock of words, even without excepting *मञ्जाशब्दः*, are shown to be reducible to such significant phonetic elements as the Nairuktas have actually done, we are almost emboldened to hold that in the earliest period of the history of mankind there existed what we may now call 'a language of roots.'

Modern philologists, as it is often found, have given language such a wider scope as to include all possible forms of instrumentality whereby thoughts may be conveyed to others. Thus, movements of fingers and face are also included in their conception of language. The Hindu grammarians have, however, made no room for gestures

Gestures - as means  
of expressing thought

and the like in their definition of language (Bhāṣā). The Sanskrit word corresponding to 'language' is 'Bhāṣā' which, derived as it is from the root 'bhāṣ' to speak, applies only to articulate sounds or the spoken language as such. It must be, however, admitted that certain ideas are sometimes capable of being communicated to others by the aid of gestures or 'Ingita' almost in the same way as is usually done by the use of articulate sounds. Yāska seems to have been familiar with the occasional expressiveness of certain physical signs; but he advocates the application of words, as being the most precise and comprehensive way that ensures entire absence of ambiguity and confusion which are always attended with movements of body when considered as means of communicating thoughts. Yāska holds that it is on account of the words being most convincing and involving economy of physical exertions that 'Samjñās' or names are usually given by words, and not by some other means as gestures, etc. The author of the Mahābhāṣya<sup>1</sup> expressly states that good many ideas are capable of being signified even without the use of words, that is to say, by movements of the face and so on. In the 'Śloka-Vārttika'<sup>2</sup> also we find a reference to gestures as expressive of certain thoughts. It is now evident that gestures, etc., are, to a limited extent, as significant as words. The question then arises as to whether they possess any innate relation to significance like words, or are merely used in substitution of articulate sounds. Puṇyārāja<sup>3</sup> compares gestures with 'Apabhraṁśas,' as both of them are meaningless by themselves, and are found to express the intended sense only by means of inference. The direct expressiveness of

<sup>1</sup> अक्षरेण शब्दप्रयोगं बहुवैऽर्था मय्यन्तेऽङ्गिनिकोचः पाणिनिहारीश्व.—Mahābhāṣya, Vol. I., p. 363.

<sup>2</sup> हस्तसंज्ञादयो लोके यदर्थप्रतिपादने । भवेयुः कृतमङ्गलाः —Sec., 6. 19-20.

<sup>3</sup> अङ्गिनिकोवादिबदप्रभंशाः—Vāk-pad. Kār. 1. 151

gestures is therefore contested, and what seems to be more probable is that they, like telegraphic codes, have no significance popularly assigned to them, but they acquire meaning only by reminding one of words which are practically associated with the significance. Gaṅgeśa,<sup>1</sup> the renowned founder of the 'Navya-Nyāya school,' while determining the accurate number of instruments for obtaining valid knowledge, has discussed at length the plausibility of including 'movements of the body' in the categories of Pramāṇas. He has finally rejected gestures and the like as independent sources of knowledge (प्रमाणम्), inasmuch as the supposed expressiveness of gestures depends upon the fact of their reminding those particular words which are in reality capable of expressing the intended senses. He compares gestures with writings, as both of them are meaningless by themselves, and says that it is words alone that are found to have necessary connections with the objects they denote. Thus we see that the direct expressiveness of gestures, as a form of language, is a matter of controversy to the Hindu teachers. The conclusion to which these arguments lead is that the Hindu Philologists did not think it reasonable to recognise movements of the body as an independent means for expressing ideas. The movements of fingers and the like presuppose the existence of certain words or expressions of which they are merely physical signs, the real expressiveness resting with the words alone. True it is that there are, apart from language as such, some other ways as gestures, etc., whereby we can sometimes give expressions to our mental ideas, but it can be hardly maintained that they are as perfect and comprehensive in all cases as the use of articulate sounds. There is,

<sup>1</sup> मङ्गेतयदे चेटातोऽप्यनुभवसम्भवात् शब्दवत् सापि प्रमाद्यमतयत्वादि न प्रमाद्यानि इति चेत्, उच्यते. शब्देन चेटायां मङ्गेतयद्वात् शब्दस्वरूपयोगिनो चेटा लिपिवत् शब्द एव प्रमाद्यमर्थे कृपनात्—Tattva-Cintāmaṇi, 'Sabdakhaṇḍa. A. S. B. ed., p. 860. 20, 959

moreover, scarcely any positive evidence to believe in the existence of such a period in the history of mankind when communications of ideas were absolutely carried on through the medium of gestures or some other forms of physical movements. To hold that the origin and development of articulate speech had been preceded by pure mimesis is nothing but fallacious. Prof. Max Müller's<sup>1</sup> remark on the invention of language does not, therefore, seem to stand on a sound scientific basis.

It is nothing but surprising to find that the Indian speculators on language detected the influence of Onomatopœia in the formation of certain words, specially in the names of birds, long before the 'Cratylus' had come to light. Though we do not fully agree with Plato in assigning the origin of language entirely to the imitation of natural sounds, it is quite true that certain words speak of the same origin. Yāska holds that the word 'Kāka' is formed in imitation of the sound naturally made by this class of birds; and that names of similar origin are to be found largely among the appellations of birds. The word 'Kṛka' (कृक) in the expression कृकवाकु is also explained by Yāska as formed in imitation of sound. In the same way we are allowed to treat the words like 'Kokila,' 'Kukkuta,' 'Dandubhi,' and so forth. As we have already pointed out, certain verbal roots, as गर्द, मर्द, गर्ज, गद्, पत्, etc., might be traced to the same origin. It must be, however, borne in mind that the number of such words is very small. We are not, therefore, fully justified in holding that the origin of language is to be traced entirely to Onomatopœia. Many causes, speaking from a practical point of view, were in operation for the origin and

<sup>1</sup> 'Language is the work of man: it was invented by man as a means of communicating his thoughts, when mere looks and gestures proved inefficient.' -Science of Language, Vol. I, p. 31

The possession of articulate sounds serves to distinguish man from other animals; it is extremely doubtful whether he could have merited the topmost place in the scale of creation, if he had been wanting in distinct utterance. Man is naturally endowed with the faculty of articulating and modulating his voice, whereas beasts are physically unfit to utter distinctly. It is a fact of experience that beasts, though unable to exercise the power of reasoning, are also gifted with the power of making sounds, and what they really lack are aptitude in varying modulations of voice, as well as the faculty of developing crude speech-germs into articulate and popularly significant utterances. Notwithstanding their utter meaninglessness to us, the sounds they are apt to make have their significance, though it

development of such a popular and efficient means of communicating thoughts as language; and the imitation of natural sounds might have been one of the conspicuous factors. As most of the names of birds, far from speaking of words denoting objects known to the most primitive man, would remain unintelligible, if we try to find traces of (onomatopoeia in them, the teacher 'Aupamanaya' held the opposite view and boldly asserted that no sign of imitation of sound was even traceable in the word 'Kaka'. It is no wonder that the Xatrukas would derive the word 'Kaka' from the root 'Kal' (*कल*); for they have actually shown that even *हकार* like 'Pijana', 'Puskara', etc., are also capable of being derived from verbal roots (*हविष्यत्पुष्करात्*). While writing the aphorism '*हविष्यत्पुष्करात्*' Pāṇi had undoubtedly in view such expressions as 'Par-par', 'Mar-mar', etc., which are all formed in imitation of indistinct sounds.

is not in the power of man to follow them rightly. The author of the 'Yoga-Sūtra' (3.17) strongly believes that a 'Yogin' 'having spiritual vision to distinguish word, meaning and cognition from one another' is alone permitted to understand the sounds made by all creatures (सर्वभूतरुतज्ञानम् Yoga. 3.17). Pāṇini denotes man by the expression व्यक्तवाक्, that is, 'one possessing distinct speech.' While commenting on the rule व्यक्तवाक् समुच्चारणे Pāṇ. 1. 3.48, Patañjali observes that the epithet व्यक्तवाक् might be applied to all animals, and that the difference with regard to distinctness is one of degree. He, therefore, explains the expression 'व्यक्तवाक्' as meaning possibly 'one gifted with such a speech wherein the letters are distinctly audible.' The reference to the imitation of indistinct sound, as it occurs in the aphorism of Pāṇini, makes it clear that by indistinct or inarticulate sounds are meant those that are not capable of being exactly expressed through letters. There is consequently two-fold<sup>2</sup> word: word consisting of sound only (ध्वन्यात्मकः), as is produced by the beat of drum; and word made up of sound capable of being represented by letters (वर्णात्मकः). Of four different forms of Vāk (Parā, Paśyanti, Madhyamā and Vaikharī), it is 'Vaikharī' alone that is spoken by men, the other forms being too subtle and mystic to be uttered by vocal organs. It is distinctly audible and is usually represented by letters. We have repeatedly stated in these pages that the internal wind is manifested in the form of audible sound, while it passes through vocal organs; it is said to be distinct when it clothes itself with letters. The distinctness of utterance depends, however, on the development of vocal apparatus.

<sup>1</sup> Mahābhāṣya on 1.3.48, Vol. I, p. 283.

<sup>2</sup> शब्दोच्चारणस्य द्वयम् ।—Bhāṣāpari.-Kār 64.

Before bringing the discussion on Śabda to a close, we consider it necessary to give some accounts as to how the Naiyāyikas and the Vaiśeṣikas strenuously supported the non-eternal view of words in direct opposition to the views held by the Mīmāṃsakas and the grammarians.

The Naiyāyikas have included Śabda in the category of Pramāṇas<sup>1</sup>; but they refuse to agree with the grammarians, who assume the imperceptible Sphoṭa as the ultimate origin of Śabda; and with the Mīmāṃsakas, on the other hand, who have rather shewn prolixity in supporting the eternity of sound. Gotama<sup>2</sup> introduces the contention by pointing out dual negations or non-existence with regard to Śabda, that is to say, Śabda does neither exist before it is uttered, nor seems to be existent after the act of utterance is over. Thus having non-existence before and after the utterance, Śabda is a non-eternal entity like an earthen pot. There are, however, doubts as to the exact nature of Śabda. Some hold, continues Vātsāyana,<sup>3</sup> Śabda as a quality of ether, pervading the whole space, eternal, and manifested by sound. Undoubtedly this refers to the views of the Mīmāṃsakas. Some again view Śabda as a quality of ether having both production and destruction like intelligence; others take it as an entity produced by the conjunctions of supreme elements (air and sky). These divergent views<sup>4</sup> have given rise to a doubt as to whether Śabda is eternal or non-eternal. The Naiyāyikas seem to

<sup>1</sup> Nyāya Sūtra, 1. 1. 3.

<sup>2</sup> प्रागुत्पत्तिरभावापत्तिश्च - Nyāya Sūtra, 2. 2. 12.

<sup>3</sup> आकाशगुणः शब्दो विभूतिर्योऽसंयत्तिप्रत्यक्ष इत्येकं. आकाशगुणः शब्द उत्पत्तिनिरोधधर्मक इति विदित्यपरे, etc.—Vātsāyana Bhāṣya on 2. 2. 13.

<sup>4</sup> अतः सञ्जयः किमत्र तत्त्वमिति, अनित्यः शब्द इत्युच्यते.—Vātsāyana Bhāṣya on 2. 2. 13.



have their answer ready. Śabda is said to be non-eternal on the following grounds : Śabda <sup>1</sup> has a cause, as it is directly produced by the operation of vocal apparatus ; it is an established fact that anything that is produced by a cause cannot be considered as eternal. These arguments bear comparison with the Mīmāṃsā Sūtras कर्मकं तच्च दर्शनात्, and करोतिशब्दात् which are anticipated by Jaimini as Pūrvapakṣas. Moreover, Śabda is comprehended by the organ of hearing ; and it is used, as if it were a product of human effort. As a matter of fact, the attributes such as loudness and mildness which are often applied to Śabda to express intensity, etc., are indications that Śabda is produced and not manifested. These arguments whereby they sought to prove the non-eternity of Śabda are also shewn to be untenable, because आदिमत्त्व, ऐन्द्रियकत्व, and कृतकत्व might even be applied to eternal objects. As, for instance, the non-existence of 'Ghata' (घटाभावः),<sup>2</sup> though it has a beginning, is said to be eternal by the Naiyāyikas. Again sometimes eternal objects are also treated as if they were non-eternal : for we are accustomed to speak of parts with regard to such eternal entities as sky and soul, viz., 'a part of the sky,' 'a part of the soul' and so on. But these objections are finally set aside. How are we to ascertain that this exists and this does not ? It is by means of Pramāṇas, cognition as well as non-cognition that we take something to be either existent or non-existent as the case may be. Judged by this test, Śabda appears to be non-existent, as there is no comprehension of Śabda before it is uttered by means of vocal organs. Sometimes it happens that objects having existence are not even

<sup>1</sup> Nyāya Sūtra, 2. 2. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 2, 2. 15,

perceived on account of certain obstructions.<sup>1</sup> But this also cannot prove the existence of Śabda, as there is nothing to cover or hide Śabda from our cognition. As a matter of fact, it is the utterance of sound that gives us the cognition of Śabda, and whenever there is no act of utterance, there is necessarily no cognition of Śabda. These arguments are sought to prove the non-existence of Śabda prior to the act of utterance. (This contradicts the Mīmāṃsaka view according to which human efforts cannot produce or create the word but only serve to manifest it.) Then Gotama introduces some other Pūrva-pakṣas in favour of the eternity of Śabda, but they are finally refuted one after another. The anticipation of such Pūrva-pakṣas and their refutations are indicative of the historical relation between the Nyāya and the Mīmāṃsā systems. The upholders of the eternity of sound advance the following arguments, among others, in support of their own views :—(1) Śabda is eternal like the sky, because it is not tangible (अस्पर्शत्वात्). This ground cannot however stand, because neither tangibility nor intangibility are, strictly speaking, characteristics of eternal entities. As a matter of fact, atoms, though tangible, are said to be eternal, whereas actions (कर्म) are held to be non-eternal (transient) inspite of their intangibility. (2) Śabda is existent and not perishable as soon as it is uttered, inasmuch as it is capable of being given to others (संप्रदानत्वात्), as in the case of a teacher giving words to his pupil. This is also open to objections, as the existence of words between the teacher and the pupil is not comprehensible by any means whatsoever. (3) Śabda is eternal, as there is no cognition of the cause that may

Nyāya Sūtra, 2. 2. 19.

अस्पर्शत्वात्—Nyāya Sūtra, 2. 2. 23.

संप्रदानात्—*Ibid.*, 2. 2. 26.

destroy it. But the attempts of the Mīmāṃsakas proved entirely fruitless. The Naiyāyikas put their arguments to severe tests and discarded them one by one. They maintain that words as well as intelligence and action are all momentary. They were, however, not the first to promulgate the non-eternity of sound, since, according to the statement of Yāska, word had already been declared to be impermanent by 'Audumbarāyaṇa.'<sup>1</sup> Yāska had his arguments ready to refute the non-eternal view of words, as maintained by the aforesaid teacher, and found the division of speech into four elements compatible with his own tenet. Patañjali has, however, spoken of two-fold word—'Nitya' and 'Kārya.' By 'Nitya' or permanent word-form, he meant 'Sphoṭa,' as is suggested by sound; and by 'Kārya' or 'caused' words, he understood audible sounds that are produced by vocal organs. He also informs us that these two contradictory views had sufficiently been discussed in the 'Saṃgraha'<sup>2</sup> as to whether words are eternal or caused, and that the conclusion arrived at there was in favour of the eternity of sound.

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As to the manifestation of letters, Vātsāyana<sup>3</sup> says that the utterance of sound is caused by the conjunction of internal air with vocal organs (as throat, palate, etc.), whenever there is an effort on the part of the speaker to convey the intended meanings to others. *Prasastapāda*<sup>4</sup> takes word as a quality of the sky, comprehended by the

<sup>1</sup> इन्द्रियनिष्ठं वचनमीदृश्वरायणः—Nir., 17. 1.

<sup>2</sup> A treatise on grammar the authorship of which is attributed to Vyādi.

<sup>3</sup> दिवश्चाजनिनेन प्रथमं न कीदृश वायो; प्रैरितस्य कण्ठतालादिप्रतिघातः—Vāt. Bhāṣya on 2. 2. 19.

<sup>4</sup> शब्दोऽस्वरगुणः श्रोत्रयात्रः अचिकः.....प्रदेशवतिः—*Prasastapāda Bhāṣa*—Ben. ed., p. 287.

ear, momentary, inconsistent with its cause and effect, produced by conjunction, disjunction and sound, abiding in some portion of Ākāśa, having both homogeneous and heterogeneous causes, that is, one Śabda giving rise to another of the same class, and Śabda produced by conjunction and disjunction. Sound falls under two distinct classes : (1) sound as expressed by letters ; (2) indistinct sound as produced by the beat of drum and blowing of conches, etc. Regarding the evolution of sound as expressed by letters, Praśastapāda<sup>1</sup> gives almost the same account as is found in the Śikṣās. It is said that whenever a desire is felt within to communicate one's thoughts to others, there is invariably a conjunction of mind with soul which accounts for the utterance of sound. This utterance, however, presupposes the cognition of similar sounds that are said to have left their impressions already in memory. Desire ( इच्छा ) is then followed by efforts which bring about a movement in the region of internal air. The air thus stirred goes upwards and strikes the vocal apparatus. Śabda is generated by such conjunction of internal air with 'Sthāna' (as the निमित्तकारण ) and finally by the conjunction of 'Sthāna' with sky (as असमवायिकरण ). This is, in short, the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika view on the production of sound.

It is to be carefully noted how one Śabda gives rise to another as the immediate cause of it. The logicians seem to have given here the most scientific explanation so far as the propagation of sound is concerned. Ripples and waves on the surface of water constitute scientific examples as to how sound-waves are transmitted. It is through the medium of air that sound is transmitted. Just as a slight agitation on the surface produces ripples

<sup>1</sup> तदवर्णनचक्षुःस्थितिरात्ममनसोः संगीनात् असत्यपेक्षादधीकारणच्छा, तदनन्तरं प्रयत्नसम-  
पेक्षमावादात्मवायुसंयोगात् वायौ कर्म जायते, स चोर्ध्वं गच्छन् कण्ठादीनिभिहितः ..... Praśasta-  
pāda Bhāṣya. Ben. ed., p. 288.

in water, similarly from the first word a series of words are generated in quick succession in the ether. It is why a word is also heard from a distance. Sound acts on the tympanic membrane of the ear before it is actually heard. This is what is known as the wave-theory or **वैचितरङ्गन्याय** as expounded by the Naiyāyikas. According to another view (popularly known as **कदम्ब-कोरकन्याय**),<sup>1</sup> ten words are simultaneously produced in different quarters which again continue to give rise to numerous sounds. To hold word to be permanent on the ground that the same 'Ka'-sound is heard again and again is fallacious; the Naiyāyikas, on the contrary, maintain that the cognition of the sameness or oneness of 'Ka'-sounds indicates only **साजात्य**, *viz.*, 'Ka'-sounds belonging to the same class (**कत्व**) are only comprehended. It is therefore a question of similarity and not of identity. The scientific and elaborate way in which the doctrine of word (**शब्दतत्त्व**) has been discussed by the Naiyāyikas is really admirable. Śrīdhara<sup>2</sup> frankly admits that it is useless on his part to enter into the question more thoroughly and adduce further arguments on the origin of words, as the problem has already been solved by the Naiyāyikas with utmost lucidness and ingenuity. २०, १५१

We have already pointed out that on account of its manifold importance Vāk won the most  
Functions and importance of Vāk. laudatory verses from the ancient seers.

The 'Śruti' eulogises Vāk as the source out of which the entire universe had sprung up. The Brāhmaṇas quoted by Puṇyarāja<sup>3</sup> speak of the various purposes that are served by Vāk : By Vāk is expressed the sense ; ideas are conveyed to others by means of Vāk ; the

<sup>1</sup> 'कदम्बकोरकन्यायादुत्पत्तिः कस्यचिन्मते' — Bhāṣāparicheḍa.

<sup>2</sup> अतीवार्थं मार्गज्ञात्किं कुरुतेनास्माभिरिह भाष्यतात्पर्यमात्रं व्याख्यातम् — Prāṣasta. Bhāṣya, Ben. ed., p. 289.

वागिवार्थं पञ्जाति, etc.—Under the Vākypadiya. Kār. 1. 119, p. 44.

world with all its diversities is represented by Vāk. The Aitareya Āraṇyaka uses a well-conceived metaphor<sup>1</sup> when it speaks of Vāk as string and names as knots, whereby the world is entirely bound up. In a dialogue<sup>2</sup> between 'Sanatkumāra' and 'Nārada' in the Chāndogya Upaniṣad, we find that the former persuaded the latter to worship Vāk, for the Vedas are represented by Vāk, and no cognition of either virtue or vice, truth or falsehood and so on would have been possible at all, if there had been no such means of expressing thought as Vāk. The exalted eminence accorded to Vāk is quite clear from the fact that Vāk, of course with a deeper spiritual insight, has been identified with Brahman. In Vāk, as we have already stated, the Hindu teachers found the audible manifestation of All-pervading Brahman. Bhartrihari<sup>3</sup> is strongly of opinion that no knowledge whatsoever is possible without Vāk; it is through the instrumentality of Vāk that internal consciousness assumes audible form and ideas are communicated to others. What we really learn from it is that the author of the Vākyapadīya almost believed in the impossibility of thinking without language—a fact which reminds us of the paradox of Humboldt: 'Man is man by speech.' He continues further that Vāk represents all different branches of science<sup>4</sup> and arts, and that names or distinguishing stamps are given to objects by it, otherwise the world would have ever remained an unnameable and indiscernible complexity. Definition

<sup>1</sup> "वाकतन्निर्नामानि दामानि" तस्यैव वाचा तन्वा नामाभिर्दामभिः सर्वं सितम्—again, वाचा व वेदाः सन्धीयन्ते, वाचा कन्दांसि वाचा मित्राणि सन्धयति—Ait. Ār., 1. 6. Bib. Ind., p. 63—वाचा सर्वाणि भूतानि, etc.—3. 1. 6. (13), p. 328.

<sup>2</sup> वाग्वाच नाम्नो भूयसी वाग्वा सत्यं दें विज्ञापयति, etc.—Chān. Up., 7. 2. Nir. Ed., pp. 63-64.

<sup>3</sup> न खोलि प्रत्ययो लोके यः शब्दानुगमादृते । अनविहसिव ज्ञानं सर्वं शब्देन भासते—Vāk, Kār., 1. 124.

<sup>4</sup> Vākyapad Kār. 1. 126-128.

and classification, as two scientific methods of distinguishing objects from one another, are dependent on names. The popular 'Śruti'—**नामरूपे व्याकरोत्**—means that God not only manifested Himself through diversified forms but gave phonetic labels (names) to each.

The origination of the universe is in itself a mysterious problem ; and it appears to be still more a mystical phenomenon when we are told (in opposition to the more scientific and popular theories which acknowledged either atom, water or air as the most primordial substance), that the whole cosmic world owes its origin to Vāk. To ascribe to word or more properly, to 'Śabdabrahma,' the potentiality of producing the world has, however, a deep significance. We may approach this strange position from various standpoints. First, in view of the inseparable association of sound with sense (which is also explained in term of 'cause and effect'), we may be allowed to suggest that they might have the same relation, as manifestor and manifested (**अभिधायकः** and **अभिधेयः**), when definite objects with particular names and forms had come into existence in obdience to some unerring principles (**नामरूपे व्याकरोत्**). The author of the 'Bhāṣya' on the 'Yoga-Sūtra' 1.17 states that words do not lose their respective expressiveness even after utter annihilation (**प्रलयः**), that is to say, the same word would continue to express the same meaning in the following creations.<sup>1</sup> We may add further that as 'Pralaya' means submersion or dissolution of all finite objects into the infinite cause, and the creation simply indicates the passage of unmanifest to the manifestation, so words, to which all objects of thought

<sup>1</sup> **सर्गाकारव्यपि वाच्यवाचक शक्त्यपेक्षार्थं च सङ्केतः क्रियते**—under the aphorism 'तत्त्ववाचकः परः'.

are finally reduced on the destruction of their forms, are to be regarded as the ultimate 'World-stuffs' whereto the cosmic world owed its origin. Secondly, as the evolution of Vāk involves the operations of internal fire ("तेजसा पाकमागतः" and "तेजसैव विवर्त्तते" Vāk. 1.113-1.115), sounds may be said to have likeness with "Fire," which was declared by Heraclitus "as the essence of all things." The "Parā" form of Vāk is immutable, and symbolises the active energy of "Soul-fire." In the opening verse of the Vākya-padīya Bhartrihari has made reference to the popular doctrine of "Vivarta"<sup>1</sup> in connection with the evolution of universe from "Śabda-Brahma." This shows the extent to which Vāk was exalted by the native grammarians. To the Hindus words are not dead mechanism invented for the purpose of naming objects, but they represent the mystic embodiment of divine power that is said to have preceded the creation of material world. Philo's conception of world-producing Logos is, therefore, a nearest approximation of Vāk which was conceived by the Hindus as a potential factor of creation. The Vedas enjoin that Supreme Being had created the earth after pronouncing the word 'Bhu.' Similarly the evolution of all cosmic matters might be traced to their corresponding 'Vāchaka-Śabdās.' As meaning necessarily follows from word, so did the world from names. In his commentary on the aphorism "शब्द इति चेन्नातः प्रभवात् प्रत्यक्षानुमानाभ्याम्" Brahmasūtra 1. 3. 28, Śāṅkarā-ĉārjya has clearly shown how the utterance of significant words on the part of Brahman was immediately materialised by the creation of the world. It is explicitly stated that words first flashed in His mind before God could attempt to create the world. The same

<sup>1</sup> विवर्त्ततेऽयं भावेन प्रक्रिया जगतां यतः 'and शब्दस्य परिणामोऽयमित्याद्यादिदिविदुः । कस्योभ्य एव प्रथममेतद्विद्य' व्यवर्त्तत—Vāk-pad. Kār., 1. 121, p. 45.

<sup>2</sup> सभृतिरित्याह सभृतिमुदसृजत्—Tait. Brāhmaṇa, 2.2.4.2.



truth is, however, illustrated by the Christian dogma, as is incorporated in the Biblical passage—'Let there be light and there was light.' The fact underlying this phenomenon is that the creative volition (सिमृत्तात्मिकाप्रवृत्तिः) of God (to get into diversity from unity) was, so to speak, the efficient (though not material) cause that brought the material world into existence. Bhartrihari strongly believes in the evolution of universe from Logos and has alluded to it more than once.<sup>1</sup> As a pot, holds Puṇyārāja, is said to be earthen since it possesses all the properties of earth, so the world having inseparable connection with 'Śabdāmātrā' is called 'Śabda-vivarta' (transformation of Logos) in the holy scriptures. In support of his view the illustrious commentator has quoted a 'Rik'<sup>2</sup> which speaks of the 'world-building' power of Vāk; he has also made mention of a scriptural passage that gives the idea of a 'वाङ्मयपुरुषः'<sup>3</sup> as the creator of the universe.

Having shown the nature and importance of Vāk after the manner in which they have been  
*Classifications of Vāk.* dealt with by the Hindu teachers, we proceed to consider the question regarding the classifications of Vāk. One Rik speaks of four different forms of speech, possibly, 'Parā,' 'Paśyanti,' 'Madhyamā,' and 'Vaikharī,' and distinctly lays down that it is the 'last form (Vaikharī) which is spoken by men, other forms being too subtle to be pronounced by vocal organs. The Yogins alone are supposed to be competent to understand these mystic forms of Vāk. The 'Vaikharī' is, however, distinguished from the rest by being perfectly audible and

<sup>1</sup> शब्दस्य परिणामोऽयमिति सायविदीविदः। कन्दोऽथ एव प्रथममेतत्स्थितवर्तत—Vākya-pāṭi, Kār. 1, 121.

<sup>2</sup> वागैव विश्वा भूवनानि जज्ञे वाच इत सर्वमसृतं यज्ञसृतम्—Under Vāk-pāṭi, Kār. 1.121, p. 45.

<sup>3</sup> वृङ्मयो यजुर्मयः साममयो वैराजः पुरुषः, etc., under the Vāk., Kār. 1.121, p. 45.

capable of being expressed through letters. We find the detailed accounts of these forms of speech in various treatises. These classifications<sup>1</sup> are based upon the conviction that 'Nāda' (the first manifestation of eternal consciousness) which, as we have already stated, has its origin in 'Vindu,' receives materialisation by the operations of internal air residing in 'Mulādhāra.' The four forms of speech correspond, however, to four different stages through which 'Nāda' passes till it becomes audible." Thus we may start with 'Vindu' as the ultimate germ of speech and proceed from 'Mulādhāra' to mouth to show how 'Śabda-Brahma' or 'Parā' Vāk reveals itself into popular speech. The nature of 'Parā Vāk,' as described in the Mahābhārata, shows that it is luminiferous consciousness residing in 'Mulādhāra,' and is

Parā Vāk  
virtually indestructible. It is what is known as 'Para-Brahma' or the essence of Logos. Nageśa holds it as the potential factor of creation. When this 'Nāda' or 'Śabda-Brahma' gets more and more

Paśyanti Vāk  
manifested and the internal air that serves to reveal it comes up to the naval region from 'Mulādhāra' we have 'Paśyanti' form of Vāk which is indivisible into parts and has intelligence for its ingredient. Next in order comes 'Madhyamā'

Madhyamā  
which is revealed by the same air when passing through heart. It must be remembered here that these three kinds of Vāk, amplifications as they are of the same "Nāda," represent, so to speak, the minutest, minuter, and minute forms of "Pranava." The Vaikharī form of Vāk is, as stated above, spoken by men; it is generated when that internal air which

<sup>1</sup> चत्वारिवाक्परिमितापदानि— Rigveda. 2.3.22.25.

<sup>2</sup> See Mañjūbhāṣā, pp. 175-179, and Vāk, padhya. 1, 144. "वय्यावावः पंपदम्."

has its rise in "Mulādhāra" passes through throats and finally finds audible expression in the mouth. This is in short what we know of the classifications of Vak. No such classifications, we are sure, are to be found in any other linguistic speculations of the world; what had really formed the subject of linguistic inquiries of Western scholars from Heracleitus to Bopp was the outward aspect of speech, that is, sound as is produced by the exercise of vocal organs. They did not, however, see deeper and think over the minute internal or psychological operations that take place in the vocalisation of thoughts.

Expression of thought is the sole purpose that is served by the use of language; ideas are, again, completely and best expressed through the medium of sentences as such and not by means of individual words. Jagadīśa<sup>1</sup> holds that the so-called verbal cognition (शब्दबोधः) is obtained only from a sentence, that is, when a number of words having proximity, expectancy and competency with one another are related to one another in such a way as to constitute a significant sentence which is alone sufficient to express the sense or communicate ideas to others. It is true that in some cases a single word is found to be as perfectly expressive of ideas as a sentence would be. The obvious answer is that in such cases the individual word retains in itself the entire force of the sentence the import of which is to be derived by means of usual inference or context. Each individual word, expressive as we call it, is thus an epitome of the sentence of which it forms an integral part. In his commentary on the Yoga Sūtra III.17 Vyāsa rightly observes that a word when used individually is intended to express

<sup>1</sup> वाक्यभावमवाप्तस्य सार्थकत्वावबोधतः ; सम्पद्यते शब्दबोधा नतन्मात्ररूपबोधतः—Śabdusaktiprakāśikā-Kār. 12.

the import of a sentence. As, for instance, when the word “**वृक्षः**”<sup>1</sup> is uttered, some such word as “**asti**” (exist) is necessarily to be supplied to make the sense complete. A word, according to this view, is not expressive by itself (the real expressiveness being associated with the sentence), but appears to be significant from the consideration that it represents a sentence in a condensed form. Both Patanjali and Vyāsa seem to have been conscious of the fact that certain words retain in their very formations the entire significance of sentences. That a word sometimes stands as an abbreviation of a sentence or as one that comprehends in itself the entire meaning of a sentence is best illustrated by such word as “**श्रोत्रियः**” which is only a condensed form of the sentence “**छन्दोऽधीते**” (one who reads the Vedas) and so on. Language, viewed as significant utterances, started with sentences and not with individual words. The example<sup>2</sup> set by the Hindu teachers as to how children learn language suggests that children first acquaint themselves with sentences they hear from others and then determine by analysis the significance of each element composing the sentence. Though there are eight different forms of “**Sphoṭa**,” says the author of the ‘**Śabdakaustubha**,’ it is **वाक्यस्फोटः**<sup>3</sup> alone that is really significant. Bhartrihari<sup>4</sup> holds that sentence, as a significant expression of thought, is not divisible into parts, the grammatical analysis of a sentence being only an artificial

<sup>1</sup> सर्वपदेषु चास्ति वाक्यशक्तिः, वृक्ष इत्यादि शब्दातिशयस्य... इष्टं च वाक्याय पदरचनं यावत्तिष्ठच्छन्दोऽधीते—Joga-Vyāsa. विभुतिपदं. Compare Mahābhāṣya, Vol. II, p. 389.

<sup>2</sup> “संकेतव्ययः पूर्वं हृदयस्य व्यवहारतः”—गामानयतिकेन चित्रिपुर्णन नियुक्तः कथन व्ययस्य महाकृतोऽयं प्रतीय गवानयनं करोति, तच्छोपलभमानो बालः इदं गवानयनं भगोचरप्रवृत्तिजन्यम्... यतः वृक्षवाक्यमेव तदभाधारणत्वेनावधारयति. etc.—Śabdaśakti, Kār., 20 (Ben. ed.), p. 116.

<sup>3</sup> यद्यप्योहाटी पक्षा उक्तान्थापि वाक्यस्फोटपदे तात्पर्यव्ययकृताम्.—On Sphoṭa.

<sup>4</sup> पदे नवर्णा विद्यान्वयवर्णव्ययवा इव। वाक्यात् पदानामन्यन् प्रविचको न कथन—Vāk., 3.73.

device. As an adherent to the theory of 'Sphoṭa', the author of the 'Vākyapadīya' continues that as letters like 'क,' etc., do not admit of further decomposition, so there are no parts or letters in a word, and words again have no separate existence apart from the sentence. In the 'Taittirīya' Saṃhitā there is a definite indication that in the original state of language there had been no systems of grammar so as to divide the elements of speech into so many parts (noun, verb, preposition, etc). Speech is an indivisible<sup>2</sup> compact; the significant unit is only represented by sentences that do not really admit of any division into component parts. It is stated further that the sense conveyed by a sentence is also indivisible (अखण्डः).

A sentence<sup>3</sup> generally means a collection of words having mutual proximity, expectancy and competency. But 'Bhartrihari' has carefully shown the diversities of views as to the exact nature of a sentence. We give below only short accounts of these different views : -

(1) Sometimes a verbal form is sufficient to constitute a significant sentence, or, in other words, action (धात्वर्थ) or 'Kriyā' represents the meaning of a sentence. The verbal form वषति, for instance, may be used with the same significance, as is usually expressed by the sentence 'वर्षति देवोजलम्,' both subject and object being readily understood from the very idea of propriety.

(2) A sentence is a combination of words. As to the meaning of a sentence, some hold that it is the sumtotal of meanings that are usually denoted by words forming the sentence; others suggest that the meaning of a sentence

<sup>1</sup> वाचस्पत्याख्याता, etc., - Tait. Sam., Vol. 4.7.

<sup>2</sup> अपोऽनृत्यवार्कभ्यः प्रकृतिप्रत्ययादिवत् - Vāk. 3.1.

<sup>3</sup> मिथः साक्षाद्ब्रह्मस्यस्युद्दीवाकम् - Śabdasaṅkṣa, Kāṇ., 13.

<sup>4</sup> Vākyapadīya, 2, 1-2. and that follows--com.--"पकतिङ्" - पकतिङ् - वाचस्पत्येन भवतीति Mahābhāṣya, Vol. I, p. 367.

is not exactly the same as are expressed by words that constitute the sentence, but a sentence acquires some special significance that does not really follow from any word or component parts.

(3) The indivisible 'Sphoṭa,' both as a class and individual, is what is a sentence. 'Sphoṭa' has two aspects, namely, external and internal; the external 'Sphoṭa' is again said to be of two kinds, *i.e.*, class and individual. The internal 'Sphoṭa' is manifested by 'Nāda.' It is called 'Sphoṭa' because meanings are virtually expressed by it. The reason why 'Sphoṭa' is identified with the significant sentence is that the Hindu grammarians ascribe expressiveness to 'Sphoṭa.' The author of the Vārttika<sup>1</sup> defines sentence as an aggregate consisting of a verbal form in combination with indeclinables, cases and attributes. In showing the way how consistent meanings follow from a sentence, the Naiyāyikas hold that the significances of words are first determined in accordance with 'saṅketa' or established usage, and then meanings thus ascertained are consistently related to one another so as to form an agreeable combination of concepts. It is from such correlations of meanings that 'Śabdabodha' or verbal cognition is produced.

In consideration of the objects that are usually denoted by words, the author of the  
Denotation and classification of words 'Mahābhāṣhya'<sup>2</sup> has classified words into four groups, namely, words denotative of class, quality, action, and 'Sanjñās' or names. Dandī<sup>3</sup> also made the same classifications with inconsiderable difference, as he added 'substance' in the place of 'यदृक्काशब्दः.' This was, however, adversely criticised by

<sup>1</sup> भाष्यात् साध्यकारकविशेषं वाक्यम् — Mahābhāṣhya, Vol. I, p. 367.

<sup>2</sup> चतुर्थी शब्दानां प्रवृत्तिः, ज्ञानिशब्दाः, गुणशब्दाः, क्रियाशब्दाः, यदृक्काशब्दः वाच्यतया — Mahābhāṣhya, Vol. I, p. 19.

<sup>3</sup> See Śabdauktiprakāśikā, Kār., 18.

the Naiyāyikas on the ground that the division of words, as shown by Dandī, did not take notice of such words as ऊङ्, मूकः, etc., which do not fall under any group shown above. Before we can arrive at any conclusion as to the exact denotations of words, we are confronted with a controversial point whether words are expressive of class or individual. The 'Mīmāṃsā' <sup>1</sup> Sūtras of Jaimini record such a controversy. Having discarded all arguments brought forward in support of the individualistic theory of words, the Mīmāṃsakas have shown the plausibility of the view that all words without exception are denotative of class. According to Vājapyyāyana, <sup>2</sup> as is also held by the Mīmāṃsakas, words denote class, the idea of individuals (व्यक्तिः) being expressed by the interdependence or invariable correlation of a class with individuals. Vyādi, <sup>3</sup> on the other hand, holds that as an active agent directly concerned with action, individual is what is really meant by a word. 'Mammata' <sup>4</sup> observes that the Individualistic theory, as referred to above, is exposed to the faults of 'endlessness and vagueness.' The view of Pāṇini, <sup>5</sup> as is shewn by Patanjali, with regard to the denotation of words, is that both class and individual are meant by words. Patanjali has also selected two aphorisms from the Astādhyāyī to show that Pāṇini has combined the two opposite views held by Vyādi and Vājapyyāyana. The Naiyāyikas have, however, brought about a reconciliation between these contradictory theories by holding that

<sup>1</sup> आकृतिस्तु क्रियार्थत्वात्—Mīm. Sūtra, 1.3.33. See also Vāk. pad. comm. on, 3.2.

<sup>2</sup> आकृत्यभिधानाद्, etc.,—Māhābhāṣya, Vol. I, p. 242.

<sup>3</sup> "द्रव्याभिधानं व्याप्तिः"—M. Bhāṣya, Vol. I, p. 244.

<sup>4</sup> "आनन्त्यादौ भिचारश्च"—Kāvya-Prakāśa-Com.-Kār., 2. 10, Bom. ed., p. 34.

<sup>5</sup> किं पुनराकृतिः पदार्थः...द्रव्यं वा । उभयमित्याह । उभययास्माचार्येण सूत्राणि पठितानि—1., p. 34. M. Bhāṣya Vol. I, p. 6. Puṇyavāraja पाणिनिदर्शने जातिद्रव्यं शब्देनाभिधीयते—Vāk. pad., 3, p. 6,

it is neither class nor individual alone that is denoted by words, but व्यक्ति; or "individual" conditioned or qualified by genus represents the real significance of words.<sup>1</sup> Thus we see that the Naiyāyikas brought the controversy to a close in an admirable way. The author of the Vākyapadīya has finally dealt with the question from the standpoint of non-dualism (Advaitavāda).<sup>2</sup> The real and unreal elements, he says, existing in all phenomenal entities indicate respectively genus and individual. He continues further that the transcendental existence (परमार्थसत्ता)<sup>3</sup> permeating the entire universe appears in different forms in various substrata or individuals; it is to be regarded as the *summun genus* which is ultimately denoted by all words; it is essentially what is meant by all Prātipadikas or crude word-forms, verbal roots, and suffixes like 'tva' and 'tal.' It is this all pervading existence which reveals itself through six different stages, namely, existence, production, growth, transformation, decay and destruction.

It will not be out of place to mention here that the Buddhist philosophers held a peculiar view regarding the denotation of words. They contend that neither class nor individual is actually denoted by words, as the very conception of their realities is a matter of controversy. The 'class-theory' is untenable, because there is much doubt as to the very existence of a genus; the opposite view is similarly refuted on account of the momentary character of individuals. According to the doctrine of

<sup>1</sup> 'जातिमान् शब्दार्थः' । शक्तिर्जातिशक्तिविशिष्टव्यक्ती विद्याव्यति — Bhāṣya-parichheda, p. 148. (K. Tarkatīrtha ed.)

<sup>2</sup> व्यक्ताकृतिजातयश्च पदार्थः—Nyāya Sūtra. 2.2.69. Com.—जायवर्णवृक्षसङ्घे त-  
वती नेमिलिकीमता—Śabdasakti.

<sup>3</sup> Vāk-padī Kār.—3. 32. 4, pp. 28-29.

<sup>4</sup> सत्त्वस्मिदात् सत्त्वेव विद्यमाना गवादिषु । जातिरित्युच्यते तस्मात् सर्वं शब्दाः व्यवस्थिताः । ता  
प्रातिपदिकार्थश्च धातुर्थश्च प्रचक्षते । सा नित्या सा महानात्मा तामाहुस्त्वत्कादयः—Vākyapadīya.



“Apoha,” as is held by the Buddhist philosophers, the word “gauh” when uttered, implies “the differentiation of cow-individuals from non-cows.”

There is, however, another way of classifying words from the standpoint of the rhetoricians. In rhetorics we find three kinds of words,<sup>1</sup> namely, (1) Vāchaka or denotative words, which denote exactly the same meaning as is fixed by the volition of God (Saṅketa) or popular usage; (2) Lākṣhaṇika or words with secondary significance; and (3) Vyañjaka, *i.e.*, words that express the suggested sense. We should be particular to notice here that this threefold division pertains more to the designation or attributes than to the object designated. Consequently there is no definite group of words either as denotative, indicative, or suggestive, but what we find actually is that the same word, as “Gaṅgā,” in the expression “गङ्गायां घोषः,” might be used as denotative, indicative and suggestive according to the context and sense of propriety. It is also to be noted that the third form, *i.e.*, Vyañjaka is to be found only in poetry. In the Nyāya and Vaiśeṣhika systems we do not hear of such suggestive words and suggestion which, according to them, come under the category of Lakṣhaṇā taken in a wider sense.

According to Gotama,<sup>2</sup> class, form and individual are all that are meant by a word, whereas the followers of the new school of Logic hold that individual (व्यक्तिः) qualified or conditioned by class is what is really denoted by all words. The Naiyāyikas have classified words into four groups:<sup>3</sup> (1) words having conventional meanings assigned to them (रूढः); (2) words with secondary

Classifications of words from the logical standpoints.

<sup>1</sup> आराचको लाघदिकः शब्दोऽव व्यङ्गकस्त्रिधा—Kāvyaaprakāśa. kār. 5.

<sup>2</sup> व्यङ्गानुतिजालयस्य पदार्थः—Nyāya Sūtra, 2.2.65.

<sup>3</sup> Śabdaśakti. kār. 16, p. 81 (Ben. ed.).

significance (लक्षकः); (3) words having both primary and derivative meanings (योगरूढः); (4) words having only derivative significance (यौगिकः). To the first group belong words like "gauh," etc., which have their respective meanings fixed by "Sāṅketa" or popular usage. The peculiar characteristics of words coming under this class are that the meanings derived by analysing such words into stems and suffixes are not exactly the same as their popular or innate significance. The word "gauh," for instance, derived as it is from the root "gam" to go, would radically mean a "moving being," and not necessarily one furnished with dewlap, hoofs, horns, etc., if derivative significance were of any importance in the case of such "रूढशब्दः." Words of this description are popularly called "संज्ञा." The word "Gangā," as in the expression "गङ्गायां घोषः," would be inconsistent<sup>2</sup> if taken in its primary significance (भगीरथखातावच्छिन्नजलप्रवाहः): it is, therefore, said to be used in its secondary sense when it is taken to indicate "bank" instead of its natural signification "current of water," in order to render the context consistent. The योगरूढ class of words comprises such words as "Paṅkaja," etc., which combine in themselves twofold significance—derivative as well as conventional. The word "Paṅkaja" means "lotus" by the force of convention (Sāṅketa), and also implies analytically or derivatively "mud," "production," and "agent" (पङ्क-जनि-कर्तृत्वम्), that is, "a substance that grows in mud." To the यौगिक class belong words like "Pāchaka," "Pāṭhaka," "Kāraka," etc., which denote the same meanings as are signified by the component parts in which they might be grammatically analysed.

Before bringing this topic to a close, we have a few more words to say in regard to primary and secondary

<sup>1</sup> रूढ संकेतवद्नाम सेवसंज्ञं ति कीर्त्यते—Śabdaśakti.

<sup>2</sup> लक्षणा शक्यसम्बन्धात्तात्पर्यानुपपत्तिः—Bhāṣhāparichheda.

significance. We have already noticed that words may have both primary or innate and secondary or indirect meanings ; the primary significance is precisely the same as the conventional meaning assigned to a word from time immemorial ( शक्तिः ); it is to this original sense that we look for the real denotations of words ( शक्तिः ). The secondary significance is so called because there is no such direct or necessary association between a word and its secondary sense which is entirely dependent on popular fashion. In a sentence like “manchāḥ krośanti,” “chairs are making noise” (*cf.* the English idiom “an address or voice from the chair, *i.e.*, president), as the idea of “making noise” is found to be inconsistent or incompatible with that of a chair, we are necessarily forced to suggest in the fitness of things that the word “manchāḥ” should be understood as indicating “people sitting on chairs.” We should not, however, fail to notice here that in doing so the word “mancha” had to give up its primary significance and came to indicate a meaning which could only be obtained either from the context or from an idea of compatibility. It is nothing but interesting to point out here that there are some words which have almost entirely lost their original sense and are now used always in their secondary significance. We may take, for instance, words like “kuśalaḥ” and “pravīṇaḥ” that are no longer used respectively in the sense of “cutter of kuśa-grass” and “expert in playing on lyre,”<sup>1</sup> but have obtained currency and popular approval with regard to their secondary meanings, *viz.*, “expert” or “skilful.” It is what is known in Semantics as an instance of “widening of meaning.” The secondary meaning is not, however, totally unconnected with the direct or primary one in such cases, for none but a skilful person can cut sharp kuśa-grass and play on lyre.

<sup>1</sup> प्रकृष्टो बोधायं प्रवीणो गान्धर्वो अथ छत्रं मुख्या इति:—Durgāchārjya, Nirukta, p. 156.

We have already referred to the passage of the "Taitti. Samhita" where speech is said to have

Parts of Speech.

been originally undivided into parts. The analytical method adopted in the divisions of Vāk is purely a grammatical device which is at best nothing but artificial. Bhartrihari has emphatically stated that the grammatical way of analysing speech is only an imaginary means that helps us evidently to understand the meaning of an "indivisible sentence" more particularly. Language, with all its diversified forms, appears to be such a complex phenomenon that the first duty of a grammarian has always been to divide a particular language into a number of constituents, his aim in doing so being obviously to facilitate the study of that language.

There are, according to Yāska,<sup>1</sup> four parts of speech—Noun, Verb, Preposition, and Indeclinable. It is not, however, certain if Yāska was the first to make such a classification, because already in the (Gopatha Brāhmaṇa<sup>2</sup> we meet with such grammatical terms as "dhātu," "ākhyāta," nāman (noun), vibhakti (case-ending), vachana (number), līṅga (gender) and so on. What is probable is that Yāska found such well-marked classifications already in existence either amongst the grammarians or etymologists who had preceded him. Yāska has cleverly put noun and verb under one group, and made afterwards a separate compound comprising preposition and particle, the priority of order being obviously due to the relative importance of noun and verb so far as linguistic studies are concerned. The importance of noun and verb, as significant elements of speech, lies in the fact that they possess innate significance which they do not lose even when they are

<sup>1</sup> Nirukṭā. 1.1. "चत्वारि पदजातानि नामाख्यानि चोपसर्गनिपाताश्च"

<sup>2</sup> ओकारं पृच्छामः, कीधातुः, किं प्रातिपदिकम्, किं नामाख्यातम्, etc., R. L. Mitra ed., p. 12 (प्रथमप्रपाठकः) ।

used independently of preposition and particle, whereas preposition and particle have no meanings when they are detached from nouns and verbs. It must be admitted that Yāska's classifications of speech are scientifically accurate. The omission of pronoun in the list does not make any serious defect, for the evolution of pronoun is of comparatively modern origin in the development of language. Moreover, pronoun is only a special form of noun. A word is only needed to explain why adverb is lost sight of by Yāska in the classifications of parts of speech. True it is that the conception of adverb is almost as old as that of verb and consequently adverb ought to have been mentioned along with verb as a separate part of speech ; but it is none the less true that prepositions, if they have any significance, are frequently used as qualifying attributes of verbs to which they are added. In explaining the aphorism “**क्रियाविशेषक उपसर्गः**” (M. bhāshya, Vol. I, p. 256), Patañjali clearly states that the preposition “**pra**” in “**prapachati**” qualifies the action denoted by “**pach.**” What we really learn from this attributive character of prepositions is that they have adverbial sense, and consequently Yāska's classifications are virtually correct as well as complete. Yāska<sup>1</sup> defines verb as a word which denotes action (**भावः**) and noun as what involves the idea of substance ; and holds on the authority of “**Vārshyāyaṇi**”<sup>2</sup> that “**bhāva**” reveals itself in six different aspects, namely, existence, production, transformation, growth, decay and destruction. Aristotle's definition of verb gives undue prominence to the idea of time, but does not take notice of the fundamental conception associated with verbs in general, that is, action (**व्यापारः**). We may reject

<sup>1</sup> भावप्रधानमाख्यातं सत्वप्रधानानि नामानि—Nir. 1.1. p. 37.

<sup>2</sup> षड् भावविकारा भवन्तीति वाच्यं यणिः जायते. अस्ति. विपरिणामते, वर्धते. अपक्षीयते, विनश्यतीति.—Nir. 1.1.2. p. 44.

Aristotle's definition of noun as being negative. A careful comparison will undoubtedly show that Yāska's definitions of noun and verb are more comprehensive and accurate than those suggested by the great Greek philosopher. As regards prepositions, Yāska<sup>1</sup> says that prepositions, according to Śākaṭāyana, have no significance apart from nouns and verbs, *i.e.*, when separated from verbs, they do not seem to have any independent meanings of their own, like letters taken separately from a composite word. This view was, however, contradicted by Gārgya<sup>2</sup> who held, on the contrary, that prepositions, even when they were taken separately from verbs, were found to have various meanings. Yāska probably expresses his own view consistently with the grammarians when he maintains that prepositions serve only to specialise the meanings of nouns and verbs, or, in other words, prepositions are rather indicative (द्योतकः) than denotative (वाचकः). As regards particles, Yāska holds that they have various meanings. The particles like इव, चित्, न, नु are used to imply "comparison," as in the expression "अग्निरिवेन्द्रः" and so on; some particles like च, वा, etc., denote "conjunctions of meanings" (कर्मपिसंग्रहः); and some again, as कम्, इम्, इत् and उ are only used for the sake of completing a numbered or metrical verse. In his classifications of "सार्थकः," Jagadīśa<sup>3</sup> has included particle as one which denotes its meanings only when it comes in conjunction with some other words but cannot do so independently. We shall thoroughly deal later on with the grammatical side of the question as to whether prepositions and particles are

<sup>1</sup> न निर्वहः उपसर्गः अर्थाद्विराड्हरितिशकटायनो नामाख्यातयोस्तु कर्मपिसंयोगद्योतकाः—Nir. 1.3., p. 57.

<sup>2</sup> उच्चावचाः पदार्था भवन्तीति गार्ग्यः—Nir. 1.3., p. 57.

<sup>3</sup> शब्दान्तरमप्येव सार्थकः स्वार्थबोधकम् . प्रकृतिःप्रत्ययश्च निपातयेति स विधा—Śabda-śākti. Kār. 6.

significant by themselves or they merely play insignificant parts in qualifying the meanings of verbs and nouns.

Having shown the artificial character of grammatical analysis of sentences, Bhartrihari<sup>1</sup> points out that some grammarians speak of only two parts of speech, namely, noun and verb; some have recognised two more elements, *i.e.*, preposition and particle; some again make a fivefold division by adding “कर्मप्रवचनीय” to the list. Puṇyārāja draws our attention to the fact that these five parts of speech are, on a closer examination, reducible to two, *i.e.*, noun and verb, since particles with certain limitations are capable of being included within the category of nouns; and prepositions and “Karmapravachaniya,” as they are adjuncts to actions, are fundamentally the same as verbs. The indeclinables like “हिरूक्”<sup>2</sup> and “पृथक्,” which denote actions, may be treated as a particular kind of verbs.<sup>3</sup>

The grammarians or analysers of speech were not satisfied only with the divisions of speech, but proceeded further to analyse such parts of speech into their final constituent elements, *viz.*, stems and formative elements. Such a division which is often designated as “संस्कारः” forms the fundamental principle of Sanskrit grammar. The expression “शब्दानुशासनम्,” as used by Patañjali instead of ‘Vyākaraṇa,’ suggests that the first and foremost duty of a Hindu grammarian has always been to draw a distinct line of demarcation between Sanskrit and Apabhraṃśas by showing that only words of Sanskrit origin (recognised by the “Śishtas”) are capable of being

<sup>1</sup> Vākyapadīya. 3.1., p. 1 (Ben. ed.)—दिधाकैयित्पदं भिन्नं चतुर्धा पञ्चधापि वा ।  
etc.

<sup>2</sup> हिरूक्पृथगिति क्रियाप्रधानम् Mahābhāṣya, Vol. I, p. 95.

<sup>3</sup> See Vāk. pad. 3.1. com., p. 2.

regularly analysed into the so-called bases and suffixes, while corrupted or distorted forms (as in Prākṛita) do not come under the cognisance of their rules of derivation. The two primary parts of speech, *i.e.*, nouns and verbs, are accordingly divided into “Prakṛiti” and “Pratyaya,” which are said to have permanent relation with each other.<sup>1</sup> And in consequence of such innate relationship, neither the stem nor the formative element is allowed to have independent application; and though their separate meanings have been shown by the grammarians, it is actually the whole composite word and not its parts that is popularly used to express the intended significance.<sup>2</sup> Jagadīśa explains the relation that exists between a base and its suffix as one of inter-dependence, inasmuch as “Prakṛiti” requires to be conjoined with “Pratyaya” before it is said to have full significance and *vice versa*. It may be asked here, how words are broken up into their significant parts, namely, stems and suffixes, and how their respective meanings are determined. The philosopher-grammarians Patañjali takes recourse to a strictly scientific procedure when he concludes that it is by the “method of agreement and difference” (सिद्धत्वव्यतिरेकाभ्याम्) that radical and formative parts of words are separated along with their respective meanings. The following is the way in which bases are distinguished from suffixes:<sup>3</sup> When the word “वृक्षः” is uttered, we hear a sound, *i.e.*, “वृक्षः” that ends in “क्ष” and to which विसर्ग has been added. The meanings that are expressed by them are respectively (1) a substance having roots, stem, branches and fruits; and (2) singular number. When the dual form “वृक्षौ” is uttered, we find by comparing the two forms that the original sound

<sup>1</sup> “नित्यसम्बन्धादितावर्थो प्रकृतिः प्रत्यय इति,” Mahābhāṣya, Vol. I p. 219.

<sup>2</sup> समुदायस्यार्थे प्रयोगादवयवानामपसिद्धिरिति—Mahābhāṣya, Vol. I, p. 219.

<sup>3</sup> Mahābhāṣya, Vol. I, p. 219.



“सः,” as in “वृक्षः” has disappeared in the latter and a new sound, *i.e.*, औ has come in its place. But the sound “वृक्ष” remains unchanged. Similarly, there are also absence and appearance of something so far as meanings are concerned. In the form ‘वृक्षौ’ the notion of the singular number is absent and that of duality is present : the idea of a tree remains the same. What we have particularly observed in these two forms ( वृक्षः and वृक्षौ ) is that there are practically two parts—one permanent or unmodified and the other that undergoes change both in form and significance. The changing elements, that is, “सः” and “औ” with their respective meanings ‘unity’ and ‘duality’ are called “Pratyayas” or terminations, while the unmodified elements “वृक्ष” is called ‘Prakriti’ in Sanskrit grammar. The inflexional parts with the exception of ‘बहुच्’ and ‘अकच्’ are, according to the general rule of Sanskrit grammar, always used after bases. The author of the Mahābhāṣya has, however, unconditionally asserted that ‘Pratyayas,’ as is implied by the very term, are significant ( अर्थं प्रत्याययतीति ), and has shown, though provisionally, that certain suffixes like ‘मात्रच्,’ इयसज्, तिथच्,<sup>1</sup> etc., are found to have independent uses as well (without being added to bases). On the strength of such instances, though few in number, we are inclined to believe that what are now called ‘Pratyayas’ and have their positions fixed, might have been current as independent words in some remote period of linguistic development.

We have repeatedly stated in these pages that the grammatical method of analysing words into stems and suffixes is considered to be artificial from the standpoint of ‘Sphoṭa.’ A word, according to the doctrine of ‘Sphoṭa,’ is an ‘indivisible compact.’ As a staunch

<sup>1</sup> इयसजादीनां च केवलद्वयत्वात्.—Mahābhāṣya, Vol. II, p. 5.

adherent of the aforesaid doctrine, Bhartrihari says that the so-called division of words into stems and suffixes, though inconsistent with the essential aspect of words, is important as enabling students of grammar to understand the meanings of words with less difficulty.

As in the Sāṅkhya system 'Prakriti' is said to be the primordial element out of which the entire universe

Root—the ultimate  
germ of Speech—its  
Nature and Signi-  
ficance.

has sprung up, so in grammar 'Dhātu' represents the ultimate element wherefrom all words have evolved. The roots are the last result of grammatical analysis and form the real foundation of all words. Roots, like elements of the chemist, do not admit of further division; it is to them that the Nairuktas or etymologists look for the starting point in their process of deriving words. The analytical method of the grammarians whereby sentences were broken up into significant parts, further proceeded to analyse such parts into finer elements, *i.e.*, radical and inflexional, and finally found roots as the nicest elements that rendered further analysis totally impossible. The author of the 'Śabdaśaktiprakāśikā' has divided Prakriti or stems into two kinds, namely, nouns and roots.<sup>1</sup> But on a closer examination of facts it will be found that nouns too have roots as their ultimate bases. The roots are significant sounds, as they are always associated with the idea of action (व्यापार). There is, however, some divergence of views as to the exact significance of roots. According to Maṇḍana Miśra (a Mīmāṃsaka) 'result' alone is the meaning of roots, action (व्यापार) being denoted by terminations like 'तिङ्,' etc. The root 'gam' means accordingly 'conjunction,' and not movements of feet. Some again hold, on the contrary,

<sup>1</sup> Śabdaśakti, Kār., 14, p. 77.—“निवृत्ता प्रकृतिर्दधा नामधातुप्रसिद्धः” ।

that action alone is denoted by roots, and that the idea of 'result' follows necessarily from suffixes. Of these two contradictory views, the former, namely that 'result alone is denoted by roots,' is adversely criticised by Gaṅgeśa, the renowned founder of the 'Navya-Nyāya school.' As 'result' is invariably preceded by action, and as the relation between them is one of cause and effect, he defines the significance of roots as 'action favourable or leading to the result' (फलानुकूलो व्यापार एव धात्वर्थः).<sup>1</sup> Gadādhara, however, objects to the other views on the ground that if roots are held to be expressive of actions alone, then verbal forms like 'pachati' and 'gachhati' would have no special significance apart from those of 'cooking' and 'going.'<sup>2</sup> It must be, however, remembered here that with the Naiyāyikas the form 'gachhati,' as it means 'substratum of actions that lead to conjunction,' is sufficient to constitute a significant sentence by itself, and that the meaning of a sentence (शब्दबोध) is something more than what is usually expressed by words forming such a combination. Some<sup>3</sup> again hold that the root 'gam' means 'movements qualified by such result as conjunction.' As to the views of the grammarians, Patañjali defines roots as 'words expressive of actions' (क्रियावचनो धातुः); and elsewhere we find that both 'result' and 'action' are said to be what is actually meant by roots. 'Vyāpāra'<sup>4</sup> or action is immaterial, formless, invisible and is cognised only by inference. How is it, then, known that roots like 'pach' (to cook) are denotative of action? Patañjali answers that all verbal forms have co-inherence

<sup>1</sup> Tattva-chintāmaṇi—Śabdakhaṇḍa—A.S.B., p. 849.

<sup>2</sup> धातोर्व्यापारमात्रवाचित्वे.....अविलक्षणबोधप्रसङ्गः.—Vyutpattivāda, p. 37.

<sup>3</sup> न न्यास्तु संयोगादिरूपफलविशेषावच्छिन्नसाम्योक्त्याद्यर्थः.—Vyutpattivāda, p. 38.

<sup>4</sup> क्रियानामेयमव्यक्तापरिहृष्टा। अथक्त्वा क्रिया पिण्डीभूता निदर्शयितुं यथागर्भो निर्लुडितः। साक्षादनुमानगम्या.—M. Bhāṣya, Vol. I, p. 254.

(सामानाधिकरणम्) with 'karoti' (doing), that is to say, the idea of 'doing' is to be found in all forms of verbs. Patañjali has suggested another definition, according to which a root is denotative of 'becoming' (भाववचनो धातुः). The Mīmāṃsakas define verbs as words the utterance of which does not produce any cognition of forms or material body; and speak of two kinds of action (धात्वर्थः)—primary and secondary. In a treatise on Mīmāṃsā (Jain. Nyāyamālā) we find a two-fold action—accomplished and unaccomplished. To the 'accomplished' class (सिद्धस्वभावः) belong such verbal nouns as 'pāka,' 'pakti' 'paenah,' etc., which have gender, case and number; the 'unaccomplished' (साध्यस्वभावः) actions are, on the other hand, denoted by such verbal forms as 'karoti,' etc., which have no gender. Bhartrihari<sup>1</sup> says that 'Kriyā' seems to have many parts and represents a combination of successive actions. To revert to the main point at issue, the author of the Vaiyākaraṇabhūṣaṇa<sup>2</sup> reconciles the two opposite views when he holds that a root denotes both result and action, and that 'substratum' (आश्रयः) is signified by terminations (निङ्). That action is denoted by all roots is also clear from the fact that the denotations of formative elements may vary but the significance of radical parts remains unchanged. Now, it may be asked if there is any logical principle to distinguish the radical from the formative elements and determine their respective meanings. The answer given by Patañjali<sup>3</sup> is the same as we have already stated (*i.e.*, the method of agreement and difference) in connection with the analysis of nouns into 'Prakriti' and 'Pratyaya.'

<sup>1</sup> गुणभूतैरवयवैः समूहः क्रमजन्यनाम् । इन्द्राप्रकल्पितामिदः साक्षिशैल्यभिधीयते ।—Vākya-dīpa.

<sup>2</sup> फलव्यापारयोर्धातुराश्रयितुं निङः श्रुताः—Kṛr. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Mābhāṣya, Vol. I, p. 255.

In the Sanskrit language roots are mostly mono-syllabic in form and a large number of words is found to have been evolved out of a single root. It is only rarely that we meet with such trilateral roots as चक्रास् and the like. There are, as enumerated in the list of roots (धातुपाठ), about two thousand roots in Sanskrit. It must be, however, admitted that all these roots are not traceable in our extant literature; the number of roots authenticated by use is roughly calculated to be slightly more than one thousand. Jagadīśa has divided roots into three groups; (i) Simple or primary roots, as are to be found in the list (Gaṇapāṭha); (ii) 'Sautra' as suggested by the rules of grammar; and (iii) 'Pratyayānta' or secondary roots ending in some suffixes. The Denominative, Frequentative and Desiderative roots come under the category of the last group. The number of 'Sautra' roots is very small. Though there is no separate class of roots recognised by the native grammarians as reduplicated, the roots दरिद्रा, जाग्र, दीघो, वेवो and the like might be linguistically, though not grammatically, treated as such. Certain roots, as we have already pointed out, such as गद्, गज्, कर्द्, कल्, भज्, etc., may be supposed to have their origin in the imitation of sounds. The Hindu grammarians speak nothing about the so-called compound roots and they never tried to show that the root 'yudh' was a combination of two simple roots 'yu' (to join) and 'dhā' (to place). Nor do we find any reason to accept Prof. Pott's theory as to the amalgamation of roots with prepositions. True it is that certain roots like 'इङ्' and 'अन्' are in most cases found to be preceded by such prepositions as 'अधि' and 'प्र' respectively, but it is a fact that they have not lost their independent uses altogether, inasmuch as the forms 'इरे' and 'अनिति' are also to be found. In the Saṃhitās we rather find laxity

of relation between prepositions and verbal forms, words being allowed to intervene between them. The prepositions are kept separate from being amalgamated with verbs, as the grammatical operations like the augment 'अट्' and reduplications do not affect the prepositions at all. The prepositions have, however, some influence upon the verbal forms to which they are prefixed. The presence of certain prepositions serves to change dental nasal and dental sibilants to their corresponding lingual forms; the roots **मि, नी, भू** are allowed to have the suffix **घञ्** when they are not preceded by any prepositions.

From the grammatical analysis of words into stems and suffixes we come finally to the question, whether nouns of every description are ultimately reducible to roots in course of decomposition. Yāska records a controversy which had once issued between Śākaṭāyana and etymologists on the one hand, and Gārgya and grammarians on the other, with regard to the derivability of words from roots. Śākaṭāyana<sup>1</sup> took a very extreme view agreeably, of course, with the Nairuktas that all noun-forms even without exceptions of 'संज्ञाशब्द' are capable of being derived from roots. Gārgya<sup>2</sup> could not give his consent to the doctrine as expounded by Śākaṭāyana, but raised a voice of opposition by holding that all words as a rule were not actually derivable from roots. He based his arguments on the fact<sup>3</sup> that if all nouns were derivable from roots, then whatever performed the same action might have received the same designation ;

Reducibility of words  
to roots

<sup>1</sup> See Nirukta, 1. 12, p. 99.

<sup>2</sup> न सर्वानोति गार्ग्यो देयाकरणानां चैके—Nirukta, 1.12, p. 99.

<sup>3</sup> अथचेत सर्वाण्यप्याख्यातजानि नामानि सूर्यः कश्च तत्कर्मकृत्यात सर्वं तत्सत्त्वं तथा चक्षीरन्—  
Nirukta, 1.12, p. 99.

for instance, any one passing on the street might be called 'अश्व'. But this is contrary to popular use. He continues further that if the theory of Śākaṭāyana holds good in the case of all words, that is, if names are really suggested by actions, then an individual may have as many designations as there are actions associated with it. But this is also far from being the actual case, as we usually find in Semantics that objects receive their respective names from one action or outstanding feature. A man of Yāska's calibre was not, however, wanting in counter-arguments, and we are astonished to see how cleverly Yāska refuted those objections and finally supported the view of Śākaṭāyana to every syllable by laying particular stress on the psychological side of language. The fundamental principle underlying the etymological explanations of Yāska is that in deriving a word where accent, root and grammatical operations are not readily understood, one should take recourse to analogy, both in form and meaning, and then derive it in the light of similar forms. The principle of Etymology, as formulated by Yāska, has a scientific character, and it really reflects great credit upon so ancient a teacher who made such a comprehensive study of language and Semantics long before the Christian era. Yāska carried the view of Śākaṭāyana to such an extent as to render some of his etymological explanations simply fanciful to the modern philologists. Moreover, in deriving a word when he has failed to determine its proper analysis and meaning, the course usually taken by Yāska has been to suggest a number of roots that might furnish some definite clue as to the proper exposition of the word. Thus, while deriving the word 'Nighaṇṭu,' Yāska has pointed to गम्, इ, and 'हृ' as the possible roots out of which the form might have been evolved. When we follow the way in which Śākaṭāyana

has derived the word 'सत्यम्'<sup>1</sup> from two simple roots अस (to be) and इण् (to go), we are naturally inclined to say that such a method of derivation is nothing but fanciful. Durga,<sup>2</sup> however, corroborates the view of Śākatāyana when he shows that the etymological explanations of 'रुद्रशब्द' are also to be found in the Mantras, and that the derivations of a single word from more than one root are illustrated by the Brāhmaṇas, as, for instance, the three letters representing the word 'हृदय,'<sup>3</sup> are said to have their origin in three different roots 'हृ,' 'दा' and 'इण्.' What is still more strange is that Yāska even tried to suggest etymological explanations of proper names as 'शन्तनु'<sup>4</sup> पिजवन, अयवन, कम्बोज and the like. Consequently we see that to the Nairuktas no word whatsoever is incapable of being traced to its primary element, i.e., root. As the idea of 'Kriyā' (action) seems to be predominant in the significance of most of the words, Durga has divided words into three distinct classes:—(i) 'प्रत्यक्षक्रिय'—words like 'Kāraka,' 'Hāraka' etc., where actions are readily perceived; (ii) 'प्रकल्पक्रिय'—words as 'gau,' 'purusha,' etc., which do not signify actions at once but require a good deal of straining to find out the radical elements; and (iii) 'अविद्यमानक्रिय'—words like 'dittha,' 'arvān,' 'chandra,' etc., where the very idea of action is absent. It is, in fact, only the last two classes of words that have been taken up by the etymologists for derivation; and it is mainly in the etymological explanation of words belonging to the last group that they found

<sup>1</sup> पदेभ्यः पदेतराङ्गान् संचत्कार शकटायनः—एतेः कारितं च यकारादि चान्तरकरणमस्तेः शुद्धं च सकारादि च—Nirukta, p. 103.

<sup>2</sup> Nirukta, Bom. ed., 1-14, p. 114.

<sup>3</sup> एवं हृरतेर्ददातेरेतेहृदयशब्दस्यदर्थेफलोपदेशनायं ब्राह्मणेनैवं निरुक्तः—Nirukta, p. 114.

<sup>4</sup> शन्तनुः शंतनोस्त्विति वा शमन्तेतन्वा अस्त्वितिवा—Nirukta, p. 200.

पिजवनः पुनः स्वर्धनीयजनी भवति—Nirukta, p. 231. अयवित्ता लोमानाम्. Nir., p. 311.



immense field for the free play of their fancy. The grammarians, it must be remembered, were not wholly unanimous with Śākatāyana and the etymologists so far as the reducibility of words to roots was concerned. Śākatāyana, as is evident from the rules of Pāṇini and the references in the Mahābhāṣya, was undoubtedly a grammarian to whom is popularly attributed the authorship of the entire chapter on 'Uṇādi.' The view<sup>1</sup> of Pāṇini, as explained by Patañjali, is that words belonging to the so-called 'Uṇādi' class are not regularly capable of being analysed into stems and suffixes recognised by the grammarians. Here we find the reason why the author of so vast and comprehensive a system of grammar as the "Aṣṭādhyāyî," did not think it worth while to multiply the number of his grammatical aphorisms by bringing those words formed by 'Uṇādi' suffixes under the cognisance of his highly scientific treatment. The word 'बहुलम्' in the rule 'उणादयो बहुलम्' (Pāṇ. 3. 3. 1) is explained by Patañjali as indicative of the comparatively small number of bases to which the formative elements like 'Uṇa' are added; but Kaiyaṭa interprets it in a different way, as he takes the word बहुलम् as indicating the correctness of the so-called 'Uṇādi' forms. We should be careful to notice here that though the extent of his aphorisms was not extended to 'रुद्ध' or संज्ञाशब्द, as are usually included within the 'Uṇādi' class, Pāṇini never questioned their authenticity and acceptability, but unhesitatingly took them to be correct. We find elsewhere that the forms like 'पृषोदर,'<sup>2</sup> in spite of their ungrammatical character, are also taken to be correct by Pāṇini on the ground of their being used by Śiṣṭas who, with or without any knowledge of grammar,

<sup>1</sup> उणादयो बहुलम्—Pāṇ., 3. 3. 1. See Bhāṣya under this aphorism प्रकृतेस्तुद्धटे; and वेगमरुदिभवं हि सूत्राय.—M. Bhāṣya, Vol. II, p. 138.

<sup>2</sup> Pāṇ. 6.3. 109.

were competent to use those forms of words that are accepted by the grammarians without a word of objection. Patañjali rightly observes that the rules of grammar, however comprehensive they seem to be, are practically far from being exhaustive, as a good many words lie outside the range of grammar. This reminds us of a couplet,<sup>1</sup> probably composed by the renowned grammarian Durga Simha, which testifies to the fact that even grammarians of the stamp of Patañjali and Durga with their broadest vision and keenest intellect failed to make an exhaustive study of words. Patañjali<sup>2</sup> holds that 'Naigama' (words occurring in the Vedas) and 'Rūrha' words ending in suffixes like 'Uṇa,' etc., should be regarded as correct, and that in the derivations of words belonging to this class, sometimes bases and sometimes formative elements are to be determined on the analogy of grammatically recognised stems and suffixes.

We have already pointed out in the foregoing pages that language, as audible expression of thought, is held to be current from time immemorial (प्रवाहनित्य) by the native grammarians. It is doubtful whether man could have been what he is now, if there had been no such comprehensive medium of communicating thoughts as language. It has not only vocalised our thoughts, but has practically systematised the process of reasoning. Moreover, the world would have ever remained a complicated phenomenon,<sup>3</sup> if it were

Some general observations on the Sanskrit language and literature.

<sup>1</sup> 'सह' च भाष्यकारश्च कुशयकधियादुभौ । नैवशब्दाश्वधं : पारं किमन्यं जडबुद्धयः ।

<sup>2</sup> "नमसद्विभवं हि सुसाध," and यन्न विशेषपदार्थमस्य प्रत्ययतः प्रकृतयतदुद्वाचम्—Mahābhāṣya, Vol. II, p. 138.

<sup>3</sup> इदमन्यं तमः कृत्वा जायते भुवनत्रयम् ।

यदि शब्दाद्वयं ज्योतिराऽसारं न दीप्यते ॥—Kāvya-darśa, 1. 4.

incapable of being simplified by different names and forms ( नामरूपे व्याकरोत् ).

Judging from the number of literary productions, both ancient and comparatively modern, the Sanskrit language is decidedly the richest of all members of the so-called 'Indo-European' family. Similarly, when we consider the number of roots and inflexions, Sanskrit seems to have no parallel in the world of languages. Sanskrit was, at least to the Hindus, the most original of all tongues. The Hindu grammarians have tried to show that the 'Prākṛita' dialects are not descended from a different source but have Sanskrit as their common origin.<sup>1</sup> It is not for us to make here a bold attempt to prove that Sanskrit is the mother of all languages, nor to explain the structural resemblances of Sanskrit with Greek and Latin. The part played by Sanskrit in the history of Comparative Philology has already been pointed out. Transmitted orally from generation to generation, the ancient Hindu literature has suffered much, a good many literary works being irrecoverably lost for ever. Notwithstanding such losses and mutilations, Sanskrit literature, as it has come down to us, does not fail to show a continuous line of development in thought-process as well as in language. It must be stated at the very outset that the Sanskrit language falls under two well-marked divisions—'Vedic' (Chhāndas) and 'Classical' (Laukika). The former differs from the latter in many respects. The earliest specimen of the Sanskrit language is preserved in the Vedas, specially in the Rig Veda, where we meet with a beautiful language of lyric poetry in which the sacred invocations of our ancient forefathers found expression. In these natural and simple songs are recorded the

<sup>1</sup> शब्दप्रकृतिरपभ'श् इति स'यहकारोनेरपभ'शीनाम न खतन् कश्चन विद्यते —Panyarāja, under the Vākya-pāṇīya, Kār. 1, 149.

history of Aryan civilisation in its primitive character and the history of Indian thought in its pristine glory. This rhythmical language of the Samhitās was followed by the extensive prose style of the Brāhmaṇas. A point that is specially significant in our linguistic investigation is that in the transitional period between lyrical poetry and artificial prose, many words had undergone changes both in their formal and logical aspects, and a number of new words and expressions were coming into existence. The Vedic language in its last phase is represented by the 'Upanishads' and the ancient 'Sūtras.' The learned professor Sir R. G. Bhandarkar<sup>1</sup> has found three distinct periods in the development of the Sanskrit language. The period beginning with the Brāhmaṇas and closing with Pāṇini is called by him 'the period of middle Sanskrit.' Yāska stands midway between the Vedic and Classical periods; his work represents, so to speak, the classical Sanskrit in the making. When the elaborate and verbose prose style of the Brāhmaṇas had come to a close, there arose a more artificial style (known as 'Sūtra') characterised by extreme brevity and conciseness, which evidently found much favour with the grammarians and philosophers. The extent to which brevity was favoured by the native grammarians is best shown by the 'Paribhāṣā' अर्थमात्रालाघवेन पुत्रोत्सवं मन्थन्ते वैयाकरणाः".

The typical language preserved by the Vedas is literary, as distinguished from spoken, and, as some differences are usually observed between the two, we are necessarily led to suppose that the poetical language of the Samhitās was in certain respects different from the language generally spoken by men in those primitive days. In the absence of any positive evidence, it is almost impossible to say anything definitely as to the

<sup>1</sup> Wilson, Philological Lectures, p. 30.

nature of such a tongue, and the extent to which this popular language had influenced the metrical language of the Vedas. This spoken language which was either older than or co-eval with the Vedic language is supposed by some to have been the oldest form of Prākṛita. They hold that 'Prākṛita' is not an offshoot of Sanskrit, *i.e.*, the relation in which Sanskrit stands to Prākṛita is not one of mother to daughter, but Prākṛita seems to have practically an independent existence of its own, and is consequently as old as the language of the Vedas. According to this view, however discordant with the orthodox opinions, what we call Sanskrit (a purified tongue) might be supposed to have been developed from Prākṛita.

The Vedas, specially the Rig Veda, stands in point of time at the head of Sanskrit literature, and may be viewed as the oldest literary record of the Aryan culture. The Vedas, according to the orthodox interpretation, are regarded as existing from eternity, and not of human origin. But as far as our linguistic vision is permitted to proceed, the language represented by the Vedic hymns, as beautiful as poetical in form, does not seem to have embodied the first articulate utterance of mankind. From both evolutionary and linguistic points of view, it is difficult to assume that the first intellectual unfolding of our remotest forefathers could have found expression in so beautiful and rhythmical a language as that of the Vedas. What is nearer the truth is that in the Vedas we meet with a language that seems to have left its infant stage of cruder forms far behind and received refinement and poetical embellishment to a considerable degree—a fact that naturally strengthens the view that the Vedic language is the result of not an inconsiderable period of linguistic development; in

Pre-Vedic language.

other words, the ancient language had undoubtedly made some progress before it could produce such a literary monument as the Vedas. From the point of view of evolution, the hymns of the Vedas are far from being the first and the most original of their kind, for the artistic descriptions, occurring in the Vedas, tell a different tale, namely, that they had developed from some older and cruder forms. The hymns presuppose a long history of development, but no positive data are available to form any definite idea of it. Judged by the standard of civilisation revealed in the Vedas, the hymns seem to be the history of a people highly religious, who made considerable progress in certain departments of culture and were familiar with some social and political institutions. The hymns, it must be borne in mind, represent the polished literary language which was, as a matter of fact, somewhat different from the current or spoken tongue, the former being more artistic and artificial than the latter. In order to form an idea of this imaginary 'Pre-Vedic' language, we have only to picture before our mind the existence of a tongue—cruder in form, simpler in style, wanting in metaphor—which had ultimately developed into the poetical language of the Vedas. The structural resemblances observed in Sanskrit, Greek, Latin and *Āvestā* have led most of the modern philologists to derive their origin from one common source to which the name "parent-tongue" has been given. By comparing a number of forms, as for instance, Sk. "pañca," Gk. "πέντε," Lat. "quinque," Goth. "fimf," "Lith. Penki," the philologists have postulated a form like "\* penqwe" as the oldest and most original one. Now, this original tongue, whether identical with the Pre-Vedic language as referred to above, or other imaginary form of language that has left no trace behind, is supposed to be the

mother of all languages. In the opinion of Vākpati<sup>1</sup> it is Prākṛita that deserves such a glorious designation. It is, to speak the truth, very difficult to arrive at any definite conclusion as to the identification of such a "mother tongue."

The Sanskrit term corresponding to language is <sup>Two-fold speech—  
Vedic and popular.</sup> "Bhāshā," derived from the root "bhāsh" to speak. The term "bhāshā" was, however, as we shall see later on, restricted to the current or popular tongue, as distinguished from the sacred language of the Vedas. There is ample evidence both in Yāska's<sup>2</sup> Nirukta and Pāṇini's Aṣṭādhyāyī<sup>3</sup> that a distinction was early made between the sacred literary (metrical) language of the Vedas and the spoken tongue, the former being known as "Chhandas" or "Naigama" and the latter as "bhāshā" or "laukika." We have already said that "Chhandas" represents the literary language, as opposed to the spoken tongue called "bhāshā." Patañjali rightly uses the word "laukika"<sup>4</sup> to denote this popular speech and declares that the Vedic words are to be learnt from the Vedas,<sup>5</sup> and "laukika" words from the current usages. Yāska seems to have been fully conscious of the difference as well as the intimate relation between the "Chhandas" and "Laukika" Sanskrit. He observes that the particle "इव," as indicative of comparison, is used both in "Chhāndas" and current speech; the indeclinable "न" is used in "bhāshā" as a negative

<sup>1</sup> सयलाचो इमं वायाविसन्ति एत्तीयणेनि वायाचो। एन्नि समुद्धं चियणेन्ति सायराचोच्चियजलाह,  
Gandabādha, 93.

<sup>2</sup> भाषिकेभ्यो धातुभ्यो नैगमाहृतो भाष्यन्ते ... नैगमेभ्यो भाषिकाः—Nir. II. 2, p. 161.  
इवेति भाषायां, again नेतिप्रतिविधार्थोभाषायाम्.—Nir. 1.4, p. 64.61.

<sup>3</sup> "भाषायां सदवस्युवः"—P5p. 3.1. 108.

<sup>4</sup> लौकिकानां वेदिकानां च (ब्रह्मनाम्)—Mahābhāshya 1.1.1. P. I (Vol. I).

<sup>5</sup> वेदादो वेदिकाः सिद्धा लौकाश्च लौकिकाः—Mahābhāshya, 11.1, P. 5..

particle only, whereas in the Vedic Sanskrit it has a double significance—that of comparison<sup>1</sup> and negation. He states further that in deriving words he has sometimes derived certain Vedic forms from roots taken from “bhāshā” and vice versa.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, Yāska takes notice of some dialectical varieties or provincialisms in Sanskrit (which was undoubtedly a spoken language in his time), as he observes that in some parts of the country the verbal forms were used, while in others the noun-forms of the same root were only used. Thus, the Kambojas<sup>3</sup> used the verbal form “श्रवति” in the sense of “movement,” while the substantive form “श्रव,” meaning a “dead body,” was current among the Aryans. In the Ashtādhyāyî we hear of some Sanskrit dialects having certain grammatical peculiarities that prevailed in the eastern, northern, and southern parts of the country. Patañjali states expressly that the people of the Deccan were fond of “तद्धिताम्”<sup>4</sup> words, as they used “laukike” and “Vaidike” instead of “loke” and “Vede.” The grammatical system of Pāṇini, as it takes notice of both “Chhāndas” and “laukika” words, has merited the glorious designation of “Vedāṅga.”

The “Chhāndas” differs from the ‘laukika’ or current Sanskrit in general tone, vocabularies, and, to a certain extent, in its psychological aspects also. In the Vedic language greater attention was paid to the phonological side; Samāsas were determined by the accents, and this was specially observed in the recitations of the Vedic hymns. The extent to which importance was attached

Some distinctive features of the Vedic language.

<sup>1</sup> As in “सुवी न भामः” “दुमदामो न सुगयम्”—Rig Veda VIII. 2.12.

<sup>2</sup> Nir. II. 2, p. 161.

<sup>3</sup> श्रवतिर्गतिकर्मा कम्बोजिव भाष्यते ... विकारमसायेषु श्रव इति. Nir. II. 2, p. 161.

<sup>4</sup> “प्रियवद्विता दाक्षिणात्या यथात्वीकं वेदे चेति प्रयोज्यं लौकिकवैदिकेति प्रयुज्यते”—Mahābhāshya, I.1.1. p. 8.



to proper accentuation is illustrated by a legend which tells us that the expression "Indraśatru"<sup>1</sup> turned fatal to the sacrificer himself on account of some error in the accent. In the Vedas we meet with a large number of words and peculiar grammatical terminations which have entirely disappeared making room for new ones in the later phase of the Sanskrit language.

In Vedic Sanskrit we have both the forms "goṇām" and "gavām," while the former has become obsolete in classical Sanskrit. Similarly, we have both "asuk"<sup>2</sup> as in "janāsaḥ," and "as" as in the classical form "devāḥ" as substitutes of the nominative plural termination "jas." Again, in the accusative singular of words like "tanu" and "prabhu" we find two forms as, तन्वम्, तनुवम्, "प्रभवम्" and "प्रभुवम्"<sup>3</sup>. The instrumental singular is often formed by the addition of "आ, या," as in "मध्वा" etc., in contrast with the affixes "स्वेन्" and "ना" as in later Sanskrit. The locative singular suffix is sometimes dropped, and we have "व्योमन्" instead of the classical "व्योम्नि," and it is sometimes changed to "ā," as in "नाभा" (for नाभौ)<sup>4</sup>. The nominative plural of words in neuter gender and ending in "अ" is frequently changed to "आ" as we find "विश्वाधनानि for विश्वानि धनानि". The instrumental plural form of words ending in "अ" often retains भि: as in रुद्रेभि: and sometimes changes to ऐ as in रुद्रेः. For the Vedic grammatical forms like अतारिषत्, पत्नयः, पीत्वी, स्नात्वी, इष्टीनम्, घृतसुषु<sup>5</sup> we have now तारयत्, पत्नयः, पीत्वा, स्नात्वा, इष्ट्वा, घृतसु. It is particularly to be remembered that the Vedic subjunctive mood called "लेट्" in the Aṣṭādhyāyī is not traceable in later

<sup>1</sup> मन्त्रहीनः स्वरतो वर्णतो वा ... यथेन्द्रशत्रुः स्वरतोऽपराधात्. Pāṇ. Śikshā, 52.

<sup>2</sup> Pāṇ. 7. 1. 50.

<sup>3</sup> Pāṇ. 6. 4. 86.

<sup>4</sup> Pāṇ. 7. 1. 39.

<sup>5</sup> Pāṇ. 7. 1. 48.

Sanskrit. Most of these peculiarities have been shown by Pāṇini in his comprehensive system of grammar which, as we have already said, has treated of both the Vedic and classical forms. The infinitive is usually formed in later Sanskrit by the suffix **तुम्**, but in the Vedas we meet with a number of peculiar infinitives<sup>1</sup> (often with the sense of dative singular) as “**जीवसे, हन्तवे, दातवे, पिबथ्ये**” etc., Pāṇini observes that the compound of two words, namely, “**माह**” and “**पिह**” yielded such form as “**पितरामातरा**”<sup>2</sup> in the Chāṇdas; the root “**सह्**” (to bear) with “**ज्ञा**” gave two forms **साध्यै**<sup>3</sup> and **साद्वा** instead of the classical form **सोद्वा**, and that the augment **य** is sometimes found after **ज्ञा** as **दस्वाय** for “**दस्वा**.” The Nighaṇṭu enumerates such verbal forms as **गमति** and **इषति** which have probably changed to **गच्छति** and **इच्छति** respectively in later Sanskrit. (See “Wilson Philological Lectures,” pp. 16-20).

With regard to meaning-change, we notice that certain Vedic words have changed their meaning in classical Sanskrit. The word “**कवि**,” as explained by Yāska and Sāyana, was originally used in a general sense to denote “one possessing keen intellectual vision” (**क्रान्तदर्शी, मेधावी**), but it has now come to be used in a restricted sense, *viz.*, “the writer of metrical and rhythmical verses.” The word “**व्रत**” originally meant “**कर्म**,” *i.e.*, action in general, but in classical Sanskrit it denotes particular religious rites and ceremonies. Patañjali takes the term “**व्रत**” as meaning what is taken for food. The word “**शृग**”<sup>4</sup> was a general name for animals, and not strictly restricted to a species as “deer.” In the same way the word

<sup>1</sup> Pāṇ. 3. 4. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Pāṇ. 6. 3. 33.

<sup>3</sup> Pāṇ. 6. 3. 113.

<sup>4</sup> “**शृगो न भीमः कुचरो गिरिहा**” — Rig Veda.

“वसु,” denoting originally “necessaries of life,” is now frequently used to signify “wealth.” Even in Yāska’s Nirukta we find a good many archaic words and expressions which have grown obsolete in later Sanskrit. The words “कर्मन्” and “उपेक्षा” are respectively used by Yāska in the sense of “meaning” and “observation” or “examination;” and the words “प्रदेश” and “वर्णोपजन” are used as significant of “action” (क्रिया) and “augment of letter” respectively. Thus we see that in the course of linguistic transition the meanings of certain Vedic words have been widened, while those of others have been narrowed or restricted to some extent. Durga<sup>1</sup> particularly takes notice of such words as प्रवीण, उदार and निस्त्रिंश etc., which have lost their original significance; as, for instance, the word प्रवीण is no longer used in its particular sense to denote “one skilful in playing on lyre,” but means, generally, “expert.” There are, again, some Vedic forms which are no longer used in classical Sanskrit. The verbal forms उष, तेर, चक्र, पेष, etc., seem to have been obsolete even at the time of Kātyāyana. Patañjali observes that these words have lost their applications and are replaced by such classical forms as उषित, तोर्ण, कनवान् and पक्कवान् respectively.

It has been the subject of a great controversy whether  
Sanskrit—<sup>a</sup> spoken language.\*
 Sanskrit had ever enjoyed the dignity of a spoken language or had been simply a literary tongue in which the sacred books of the Hindus were composed. The majority of Western scholars, however, deny the possibility of Sanskrit having been ever a spoken language of people in

<sup>1</sup> Durg. Commy. Nirukta. II. 1. 1., p. 156.

\* Prof. D. R. Bhandarkar in one of his lectures, as Carmichael Professor of Ancient Indian History and Culture, dealt with this subject (“Was Sanskrit ever a spoken tongue?”) in a learned and critical way.

general. Their arguments are based on the facts that a language possessing such rigid grammatical rules and guided by such phonological niceties is not likely to have been the spoken language of the mass; and what is more possible is that certain forms of Prākṛita might have been the tongue current among people at large who were either uneducated or naturally unfit to pronounce Sanskrit words correctly. In the most fertile period of the Vedic literature, Sanskrit was, we are inclined to believe, undoubtedly a spoken language, though its currency was possibly confined to the area of cultured community of the Brāhṁas. There was admittedly a class of people, mainly composed of Brāhmins, that had Sanskrit for its mother-tongue. It is expressly laid down that a Brāhmin should not be allowed to speak in the corrupted dialects of the uneducated mass. This prohibitive injunction (न स्लेच्छितवै नापभाषितवै) is, however, said to have been rigidly observed at the time of performing sacrifice. From what we can infer from the statement of Patañjali, it appears that Brāhmins in their ordinary conversations were probably allowed to use corrupted forms like “यर्वाण” and “तर्वाण”<sup>1</sup> instead of “यद्दान” and “तद्दान,” but they could not do so while performing sacrificial rites. The demons<sup>2</sup> are said to have been defeated in consequence of their uttering corrupted words. The utterance of correct Sanskrit words, on the other hand, is said to be attended with religious merits. It is no wonder that the people, whose religious texts, moral laws, spiritual conceptions and ordinances concerning the ten holy sacraments (दशसंस्कार) are all written in Sanskrit, should have Sanskrit as their mother tongue. The term “Bhāṣhā,” as it is derived from the root “bhāṣh” to

<sup>1</sup> M. Bhāṣhya. Vol. I. p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> नैऋता ङ्लक्षो ङ्लक्षो इति कुर्वन्तः परावधुः—M. Bhāṣhya, Vol. I., p. 2.

speak, is in itself an indication that Sanskrit was a spoken language. The frequent references to “bhāshā,”<sup>1</sup> as they occur in the Nirukta, prove unmistakably that Sanskrit was current as a living language at the time of Yāska. The existence of Sanskrit as a spoken tongue is also made clear by Yāska when he says that in deriving certain Vedic words he has made use of some verbal roots directly taken from the language current at the time. Further, he takes notice of some dialectical varieties of Sanskrit as a spoken tongue. He observes that the verbal form “श्वति” meaning “motion” is used by the Kambojas, the Aryans using the nominal form “श्व” denoting “a dead body”; and the people of eastern provinces used the verbal form दाति, while the noun-form दात्र was used by the northern people. The word “laukika” whereby Patañjali denotes the current or spoken tongue is also to be found in the Nirukta.<sup>2</sup>

There is evidence to believe that Sanskrit continued to be a spoken language at the time of Pāṇini. He had in view both the Vedic and classical forms while he formulated the rules of his Aṣṭādhyāyī. As a good many Vedic forms had already become obsolete, Pāṇini had to make a number of rules exclusively for them. He says that certain suffixes, as क्तु and कानच्, are used equally in the Vedic and “laukika” Sanskrit. He sanctioned the use of some Vedic forms like अनचान्, उपेयिवान् etc., in the current language, and made provisions for such verbal forms as वेदिवान्,<sup>3</sup> शुश्रुवान्, उषिवान् on the analogy of Vedic formations. A huge system of grammar, such as that of Pāṇini, could not have practically come into

<sup>1</sup> “नेति प्रतिषेधार्थो भाषाशब्दः”; “श्वदिशि विचिकित्सावर्धो भाषाशब्दः”—Nirukta.

<sup>2</sup> लौकिकेष्वप्येतद्वयवाच्यपदोऽं ब्राह्मणो न मित्रो राजेति ।—Nirukta, p. 123. Again, लौकिकेष्वप्येतद्वयवाच्यसर्वत्रा अनुप्रासः पानीयमिति । (*ibid*).

<sup>3</sup> भाषायां सद्वचसुवः—Pāṇ. 3. 2. 108.—पूर्व तु भाषाशब्दः Pāṇ. 8. 2. 98.

existence, if Sanskrit would not have been current as a spoken tongue at the time of this renowned grammarian.

The Mahābhāṣya contains some passages which show that Sanskrit had not ceased to be a spoken tongue even at the time of Kātyāyana and Patañjali. While commenting on the Vārttika “यथालौकिकवैदिकेषु,” Patañjali states that the people of the Deccan are naturally fond of using words ending in “Tadōhita” terminations; for instance, they are found to use “laukike” and “Vaidike” instead of “loke” and “Vede.” What is stated here does not refer to a dead language; and we can reasonably assume that Sanskrit was current, though in a limited area, as a spoken tongue in the second century before the Christian era. While advocating the study of grammar for the knowledge of correct words, Kātyāyana holds that, though the meanings of words are usually determined from the current usage, the study of grammar is not rendered entirely useless on the ground that applications of words in conformity with the rules of grammar are alone attended with religious merits.<sup>1</sup> The aphorism “लोकतोऽर्थ-प्रयुक्ते शब्दप्रयोगे” etc.,<sup>2</sup> distinctly refers to a tongue that was nothing but spoken. Patañjali, while ascertaining the subject to be dealt with, states expressly that both Vedic and laukika (current) words constitute the materials of his grammatical speculations; by “laukika” he undoubtedly meant Sanskrit that was a spoken language in his time. Again, in setting forth the purposes that are served by the study of grammar, he has mentioned a verse which emphatically declares that one who does not know how to use “Pluta”<sup>3</sup> (a protracted vowel) with regard to a name in responding to a salutation,

<sup>1</sup> Mahābhāṣya, Vol. I, pp. 8-10.

<sup>2</sup> Mahābhāṣya, Vol. I, p. 8.

<sup>3</sup> Mahābhāṣya, Vol. I, p. 3.

should be treated as a female. Is it possible that such a practice was observed when Sanskrit had been a dead language? All these facts, as we have alluded to, are only explicable if Sanskrit is considered to have been a spoken tongue in those days.

On the strength of such evidence, as referred to above, we are almost justified in holding that there was a time in ancient India when Sanskrit had not been only a literary language, but had been as popular as a spoken tongue. It may be asked here, who were the people with whom Sanskrit was a spoken language or as good as a vernacular. The answer is not far to seek. It was admittedly in the traditionally cultured community of the Brahmins, and, to some extent, of the Kshatriyas, that Sanskrit prevailed as a spoken tongue.<sup>1</sup> Sanskrit was once so popular a language that it could be freely spoken by people belonging to the lower status of society. Patañjali has recorded a discourse between a grammarian and a charioteer.<sup>1</sup> In the "Rāmāyana" a demon named Ilvala<sup>2</sup> is described as capable of speaking Sanskrit. In the dramatical literature of Sanskrit we find that people belonging to the higher status of society could speak Sanskrit, while uneducated people and females had different forms of Prākṛita as their spoken language. This fact also lends colour to the view that Sanskrit, as a spoken language, was in all probability confined to the area of Brahmanic culture, and that certain forms of "Prākṛita" were, on the other hand, current among the uneducated mass. The Sanskrit-speaking Brahmins were, however, acquainted with the dialects of the neighbouring people, as they had many occasions to come in touch with them. Though with them Sanskrit was evidently a spoken language,

<sup>1</sup> एवं कश्चिद्व्याकरण आह । कौटसारथस्य प्रवेतेति ? सत आह । आयुधग्रहं प्राजितेति ।  
—Mahābhāṣya under Pāṇ 2. 4. 56.

<sup>2</sup> "इलालः संस्कृतं वदन् ।"

Kātyāyana and Patañjali seem to have been familiar with such Prākṛita forms as 'आणपयति, वडति, वडति, गाभी, गोषा, etc. Patañjali gives us another valuable information, namely, that it was not only the educated Brāhmins and the acknowledged teachers who had Sanskrit as their spoken tongue, but there was a class of people known as “*शिष्टः*”<sup>2</sup> who, with or without a proper knowledge of grammar, were naturally competent to use correct words almost in the same forms in which they are recognised by the grammarians. They were, so to speak, the authority in the use of words, and their applications, though always contrary to the rules of grammar, are accepted by the grammarians without a word of objection. Just as we can freely speak our mother tongue without knowing a syllable of grammar, even so were these “*Śiṣṭas*” able to speak Sanskrit without having any knowledge of grammar. Now, with these “*Śiṣṭas*,” Sanskrit was undoubtedly a vernacular. Even irregular forms such as “*वृषोदर*”<sup>3</sup> did not fail to receive the approval of Pāṇini simply on the ground of their being frequently used by the so-called “*Śiṣṭas*.” From what we have shown above it will appear that Sanskrit was once current as a spoken tongue among the intellectually superior classes of Indian societies.

It has already been stated that Sanskrit, as a spoken language, was confined to the limited area of the cultured community. The uneducated or ordinary people were either naturally unfit or careless so far as the use and utterance of correct Sanskrit forms were

Possibility of corruptions and the grammatical means of demarcation and detection.

<sup>1</sup> Mahābhāṣya, Vol. I, p. 259 : “*भूवादिपाठः प्रातिपदिकाण्यपयव्यादिनिहन्त्यर्थः*” ।

<sup>2</sup> See Mahābhāṣya, Vol. III, p. 174.

<sup>3</sup> वृषोदरादीनि यद्यपिपठिन्नानि. Pāṇ., 6.3.109. “यदितर्हि शिष्टा ग्रन्थेषु प्रमादम्..... नूनमस्य देवानुवृद्धः स्वभावी वा योऽयं न चाद्यायौमधीति ये चात्र विहितः शब्दाकांक्ष प्रयुङ्क्ते ।” —Mahābhāṣya, Vol. III, p. 174.



concerned. It is to such innate unfitness and careless imitations that the author of the *Vākypadiya*<sup>1</sup> traces the origin of *Apabhraṃśas* which, according to the definition of Sanskrit grammarians, have Sanskrit as their original source. The uneducated people could either understand Sanskrit, or the learned Brāhmins while speaking with them, had to converse in *Prākṛita*. Thus, as the cultured Brāhmins had to come often in contact with such untutored people in their ordinary affairs of life, there arose consequently a possibility of Sanskrit being blended, to a considerable extent, with those *Prākṛita* dialects or “*Apabhraṃśas*,” as they are called by the Hindu grammarians. As the Aryans had frequent intercourse with the black-skinned non-Aryans, some of whom were even aryanised for their ready adaptability to the Aryan manners and customs, it is not unlikely that some words and expressions of non-Aryan origin had the possibility of being naturalised into the traditionally sacred tongue of the Brāhmins. Dr. Garbe<sup>2</sup> is of opinion that the words “ghora” and “tambala,” as they occur in the *Śrauta Sūtra* of Āpastamba, have had their origin respectively in Hindi and Dravidian languages. The dramatic literature shows that different forms of speech are intended to be spoken by persons belonging to different grades of society. What is really indicated by such practice of the poets is that Sanskrit could not be spoken by people in general and that certain forms of *Prākṛita* (*Apabhraṃśas*) were current as vernacular among ordinary people. Even queens of the royal harem are found in the Hindu dramas to speak *Prākṛita*, although they understand Sanskrit as

<sup>1</sup> *Vākypadiya*. Kār. 1.149—156 “शब्दप्रकृतिरपभंश” इति संबद्धकारीति: Panyarāja on Kār. 1.149.

<sup>2</sup> *Āpastamba Śrauta Sūtra*—Ed. by Dr. Garbe.

clearly as educated people. Sanskrit had thus come to have a close touch with Apabhraṃśas; and this intimate relation might have possibly terminated in the Sanskritisations of certain Prākṛita forms. The words रणरणक and दोहद are supposed to have crept into Sanskrit from Prākṛita; words such as होरा, पिक, नेम, तामरस, and so on, are considered to be of foreign origin. With the commercial intercourse of India with the Far West, there were, if we are allowed to assume, both exports and imports of words. In his exposition of the Sūtra तेष्वदर्शनाद्दिरोधस्य समा विप्रतिपत्तिः स्यात् (Mīm. 1, III, 8), Kumārila Bhaṭṭa<sup>1</sup> observes that the words यव, वराह, वेतस, etc., are also to be found current in the Mlechha countries only with difference of meanings, *e.g.*, कङ्क, वायस, जम्बू respectively. He continues further that as words like पिक and नेम have the same meanings in both Sanskrit and "Mlechha," we are entitled to accept the significance with which these words are used among the Mlechchas, attention being always paid to the fact that these meanings are in no way inconsistent with those of the Vedas. Kūmarila states expressly that the meanings of certain words as "loma" and "kūṭa" are to be learnt from low class people as "butchers" and "makers of coins." It is a fact that the Vedic usage is more authoritative than the Mlechcha usage<sup>2</sup> so far as the meaning of a word is concerned, but there is hardly any reason why we should ignore the Mlechcha usages altogether, even when they happen to be entirely absent in the Vedas. What is really astonishing here is that Kumārila seems to have a knowledge regarding the introduction of foreign elements into Sanskrit. He lays particular stress on the fact that we should not ignore the words used by the Mlechchas

<sup>1</sup> Tantra-Vārtika—on 1.3.8, pp. 145-157 (Ben. Ed.).

<sup>2</sup> "शब्दाख्या वा तन्निमित्तत्वाद्—Mīm. 1, III, 9

simply on the ground that they are current among non-Brāhmins, since words like पञ्चोर्ण<sup>1</sup> and वारवाण meaning "silken cloth" and "armour" respectively are found to have been borrowed from foreign tongues and yet unhesitatingly accepted by the Aryans. Thus, inspite of all attempts that were made to preserve the purity of Sanskrit, a number of foreign words became ingrained into the sacred language.

Kumārila also observes that the Āryans sometimes favoured the practice of borrowing words from other dialects and transforming them into Sanskrit by necessary grammatical alterations. In doing so they were really actuated by the formal resemblance. He refers to the usual practice of Sanskritising certain Dravidian words as चोर, अतर, पाप, माल् and वैर् into their corresponding Sanskrit forms चौरः (thief), अतरः (impassable), पापम् (sin), माला (garland) and वैरिः (enemy). Continuing he says that if the Āryans could exercise their liberty of changing the Dravidian words into Sanskrit in so arbitrary a way, one cannot conceive the grotesqueness they would exhibit in transforming or Sanskritising words taken from Persian, Javana, and Roman languages.<sup>2</sup>

It was, therefore, necessary to take proper and adequate measures to retain the purity and special aspect of the traditionally sacred language. Restrictions were expressly laid down prohibiting a Brāhmin from using corrupted words; a sacrificial priest is held to be liable to expiatory rites,<sup>3</sup> if he is found to use incorrect words. This

<sup>1</sup> "पञ्चोर्णं वारवाणादि यच्च तद्वै शसम्भवम् ।

तैरेवाकथितं नाम तच्च को वेदिगुणम्" —Tantra-Vārttika, p. 160.

तस्मान्न तेषां व्यवहारप्रसिद्धौ दीर्घव्ययम् ॥

<sup>2</sup> "तद्वयदा द्राविडादिभाषाशमीहृमी स्तब्धकल्पना, तदा पारसीकवर्ष्यवनरीमकादिभाषाम् किं विकल्प्य किं प्रतिपश्यन् इति न विद्मः ।" —Tantra-Vārttika, p. 147.

<sup>3</sup> "आहिताग्निप्रपञ्चं प्रयुज्य प्रायश्चित्तौघां सारस्वतीमिति निर्बधेत्" —Mahābhāṣya, Vol. I, p. 8.

necessitated the usherance of grammar. A good many systems of grammar and etymology had thus their origin in an attempt to effect a demarcation between correct and corrupted words. The first and foremost business of Sanskrit grammar, as a science, was to lay down such rules as would enable one to distinguish correct words from incorrect ones. By the expression “शब्दानुशासनम्” Patañjali introduces the immediate purpose that is served by the study of grammar, namely, that a careful study of Sanskrit grammar is calculated to help us in distinguishing correct or recognised forms from Apabhraṃśas.<sup>1</sup> Patañjali tells us further that one correct word has given rise to numerous Apabhraṃśas,<sup>2</sup> and consequently the number of Apabhraṃśas is much larger than that of correct forms. He, therefore, finds it more convenient and scientific to give expositions of these correct words alone, the knowledge of corrupted forms being indirectly implied by the isolation of correct words. Now, it was the paramount task of the Hindu grammarians to single out the true Sanskrit form “gauḥ” from a number of corruptions like गावी, गोणा, गोता, etc., and set forth rules showing the scientific method (अन्वयव्यतिरेकी) of analysing such forms into radical and formative elements.

Having shewn the view of Patañjali as to the origin of manifold Apabhraṃśas from one correct form, we now pass on to discuss how a correct word (साधुशब्द) could be recognised and singled out from an assemblage of Apabhraṃśas that were current among the uneducated people. Grammar, as has already been pointed out, takes notice of the recognised correct words alone, and does never attempt to enumerate the Apabhraṃśas that are

An explanation as to why “संस्कृत” is so called.

<sup>1</sup> लघूयान् शब्दोपदेशः गरीयानपशब्दोपदेशः । एकेकस्य शब्दस्य बहुव्रीह्युपभ्रंशाः । गोविन्द-तन्त्रिप्रपदिष्टं गम्यते एतद्वाक्यादर्शः पश्यतः इति ।—Mahābhāṣya, Vol. I, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> “अन्वयव्यतिरेकी साधुशब्दं धी विविच्य ज्ञाप्यतेनेति शब्दानुशासनम्”—Pradīpodyota.

corruptions of them. The exposition and analysis of correct words, holds Patañjali, indirectly serve to point out the Apabhraṃśas. The form “गौ” being supported as grammatically correct, it is necessarily implied that forms like “gāvi,” “gaṇā” and “gotā,” etc., are nothing but corrupted or distorted forms originating from the former under circumstances already alluded to (natural inaptitude to utter the correct Sanskrit words and wrong imitations). The Apabhraṃśas, as is held by the grammarians, have no independent origin of their own, but have grown from Sanskrit as their common source. The existence of such verbal corruptions presupposes inability to pronounce the correct Sanskrit forms on the part of low class people with whom “Apabhraṃśas” was as good as their mother-tongue. While Sanskrit was confined as a spoken language to the narrow area of cultured community, the Apabhraṃśa-Prākṛita became more and more popular and obtained currency among larger number of people. By frequent associations with these popular dialects, the pristine purity of the “Divine tongue” was about to be vitiated. The rapid growth and widespread popularity of the Apabhraṃśa-Prākṛita were thus threatening to strike at the very root of the Sanskrit language. It was consequently felt extremely necessary (for the sake of keeping the traditionally sacred tongue intact) to devise certain means so as to retain its original character untainted by any mixture with the Apabhraṃśa elements.

The Nairuktas and Vaiyākaraṇas<sup>1</sup> came forward to analyse the entire structure of language then current, and laid down the principles of both etymology and analytical grammar in accordance with the facts observable in their language. The scientific character

<sup>1</sup> साधुलक्षणविषया देवा व्याकरणश्रुतिः—Vak. Kār. 1.143.

of the rules formulated by them lies in the fact that they almost made an entire survey of the whole field of language, so that a greater bulk of words in popular usage might come under the cognisance of their principles. While showing the nature of grammatical aphorisms, Patañjali<sup>1</sup> says that in framing rules of grammar the grammarians had had in view both the principles of generalisation and particularisation so that the rules so constructed might apply to the greatest number of words. And as the number of correct words was virtually smaller than that of Apabhraṃśas, the grammarians thought it more rational and convenient to treat of the former; and entirely lost sight of the Apabhraṃśas that grew out of the tongue in which they used to speak. To maintain the special and conspicuous features of their language the etymologists and grammarians had divided their speech into four parts, namely, noun, verb, preposition and particle (नामाख्यातोपसर्गनिपाताः) and suggested, on the scientific method of agreement and difference (अन्वयव्यतिरेको),<sup>2</sup> a number of bases and terminations known as “प्रकृतिः” and “प्रत्ययः.” This gave, however, a distinct stamp to their language, because the Apabhraṃśa-Prākṛita, on the ground of their not yielding to such analysis as suggested by the Sanskrit grammarians, were practically excluded from the range of words which were divisible into stems and suffixes as recognised by the grammarians. Such an analytical method, though artificial and fanciful, as Bhartrihari often tells us, practically served a very

<sup>1</sup> किञ्चित् सामान्यविशेषवत्त्ववर्णं प्रवर्त्य येनात्मन यत्नं न सहती महतः शब्दाघान् प्रतिपश्यन्, किं पुनस्तत् ? उत्कर्गापवादी—M. bhāṣya, Vol. I, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> ये शब्दाः नित्यसम्बन्धा विवेके ज्ञातशक्तयः । अन्वयव्यतिरेकाभ्यं तेषामर्थो विभज्यते.—Vāk. Kār. 2.168.

Puṇyārāja has—“विभागो नाम परप्रत्ययनाय कल्पितः प्रकृतिप्रत्ययादिभेदः” under Kār. 1.145.

important purpose ; for by it was drawn a hard and fast line of demarcation between the current language of the educated community and Apabhraṃśas. Since then by “Apabhraṃśas” are generally meant those forms of words which do not admit of regular division into stems and suffixes recognised by the Sanskrit grammarians, but represent, as we have already pointed out, corruptions, for the origin of which we must look back to correct words (साधुशब्द). By the expression “शास्त्रकृतो योगः”<sup>1</sup> Yāska undoubtedly refers to the grammatical way of forming words by the addition of terminations to radical elements and the conjunction of prepositions with roots and so on. Thus, the grammarians distinguished “साधुशब्द” from “अपशब्द” or “अपभ्रंश” showing the former as capable of being analysed into bases and formative elements. In doing so they made, as it were, a sort of “verbal purification” (शब्दसंस्कार) by which they succeeded in obviating the introduction and amalgamation of Apabhraṃśas with their sacred tongue. The language which had thus received “संस्कार” or regular grammatical analysis at the hands of the “analysers of speech” (Vaiyākaraṇa) came to be known as “संस्कृत” (purified tongue) in later times. Yāska<sup>2</sup> seems to have been conscious of such “संस्कार” as he uses the word “संस्कारः” in connection with the grammatical analysis of words into stems and terminations. As no such “संस्कारः” or purification of words had possibly been made in the earliest period of the Vedic literature, we fail to notice there such a qualitative term as “संस्कृत”. In the Vedic literature we meet with the general term “Vāk” denoting

<sup>1</sup> शास्त्रकृतोयोगः शास्त्रदृष्टः शब्दस्य शब्दान्तरेष्वयोगः। तदयथा—उपसर्गस्य धातुना, धातोः प्रत्ययेन, प्रत्ययस्य स्त्रीपागमवर्णविकारेः ॥—Durga. Nirukta, p. 45.

<sup>2</sup> यत्र स्वरसंस्कारी समर्थो प्रादेशिकेनाविर्तो स्याताम्—etc., Nirukta. 1.14. p. 108. खिलानामिव शब्दानामन्याख्यानं हि संक्षिप्ता—quoted by Śrīpati in his Kāntanta Parīśiṣṭa.

speech which is sometimes spoken of as a divine creation "दैवीवाक्." That such grammatical analysis of sentences and words is not of much earlier date is borne out by the "Taittiriya Samhitā" (VI. 4. 7), where it is explicitly stated that speech was not originally divided into parts and that it was Indra who in response to the appeal of the gods first attempted to analyse or break up speech into its significant parts. Thus, we can somehow account for the absence in early literature of the term "संस्कृत" in this particular sense. The terms व्याकरोत्, व्याकृत and व्याकरवाणि are to be understood as referring to the grammatical process of analysing speech. Among ancient works, it is in the Rāmāyaṇa<sup>1</sup> that we meet with the term "संस्कृत" exactly in the same sense. In Pāṇini also we miss it and find such word as "भाषा" which is only a general name whereby "spoken language" was denoted. Patañjali uses the word "laukika" instead of संस्कृत. The author of the Vākyapadīya has clearly referred to such "संस्कार" (शब्दसंस्कारहीनो यः, etc.) and defines Apabhraṃśas as those corrupted forms which have no such verbal refinement (संस्कार). In Daṇḍin we find the term "संस्कृत" as applied to a language (संस्कृतं नाम दैवीवाक्).

The rise of Buddhism, as it was attended with growing popularity of Prākṛita dialects, urged the Hindu grammarians to the analysis of sentences and words in order to save their sacred tongue from being polluted by frequent intercourse with Prākṛit. Thanks to their fruitful labours, the sacred tongue has been preserved intact. But we have only one word to say, namely, that while we speak so highly of the parts played by the Hindu grammarians, we cannot shut our eyes to the undesirable consequence that resulted from such rigidity

<sup>1</sup> Vākyapadīya Kār. 1.149, p. 59.

<sup>2</sup> धारयन् ब्राह्मणं कर्तुं इत्यलः संस्कृतं वदन् ।



of grammatical systems. Bound by strict rules of grammar, Sanskrit had its further development forcibly checked, and it finally shared the fate of a dead language.

We have already pointed out that the sacred character of the Sanskrit language won for it the glorious designation of "Divine tongue"; and it was truly or falsely believed to be the most original of all tongues. The structural similarity of Sanskrit with other members of the so-called Indo-European family may be explained as accidental, but it must be admitted that the popular dialects of India generally known as the Prākritis had been organically and generically related to Sanskrit. From the numerous definitions that have been suggested of the word "Prākrita" it is quite clear that these dialects, as they were spoken by the uncultured mass, had Sanskrit as their source of origin. The rise of Buddhism gave prominence as well as dignity to such Prākritis, specially to Pāli (the ancient Māgadhi dialect). In contradiction to the orthodox view, Prākrita was held by some as a popular language of independent origin and not necessarily a direct offspring of Sanskrit. The supposition is now gaining ground that the oldest form of Prākrita is not even posterior to the Vedic Sanskrit, but had been current as the spoken language of the mass existing side by side with the Vedic Sanskrit. It is almost a truism that as a spoken language Sanskrit could not transcend the boundary of educated community and evidently a different form of language, say Prākrita, prevailed among people at large. This popular tongue is now identified by some with the oldest form of

Apabhramṣa-Prākri-  
ta—their origin as con-  
ceived by the Hindu  
grammarians—their  
expressiveness.

<sup>1</sup> प्रकृतिः संस्कृतं तत् आगतम्—Hem Chandra. 8.1.1.

प्रकृतिः संस्कृतं तत्प्रकृतिः।

प्रकृत्या स्वभावेन सिद्धमिति प्राकृतम्।

प्राकृतजनानां भाषा प्राकृतम्।

Prākṛita. What is still more striking is that Sanskrit is held, in opposition to the views of the Hindu grammarians, to be a development out of the crude materials supplied by Prākṛita in its oldest forms. Further, Prākṛita continued to be a spoken tongue, even when Sanskrit had ceased to be so; it has behind it a history of its origin and diffusion and does not stand to Sanskrit in the relation of daughter and mother. The short compass of this thesis will not, however, permit us to give here a detailed history of the Prākṛit language and its philological importance. Moreover, the object kept in view in writing these pages has been not so much to deal with comparative philology in its manifold aspects as to point out in brief outline the views of Sanskrit grammarians regarding the problems of Hindu philology. A perusal of the Prākṛita grammars, such as those of Vararuchi, Hem Chandra and others, will convince one beyond any shadow of doubt that Prākṛita in its diversified forms was directly descended from Sanskrit. It was only Vākpati,<sup>1</sup> the author of a well known Prākṛita epic (Gauḍabadha), who looked upon Prākṛita from a different standpoint. The word 'तद्भव' (evolved from Sanskrit), as applied to a variety of Prākṛita, corroborates the view that Prākṛita has directly originated from Sanskrit. The general term used by the grammarians to denote this class of corrupted dialects is 'अपभ्रंश' or 'अपभ्रंश,' because the characteristic feature of these dialects is that they represent only the perverted or distorted forms of Sanskrit. We have sometimes used in these pages the term "Prākṛita" as equivalent of the so-called Apabhraṃśas on the assumption that in the opinion of Sanskrit grammarians, Prākṛita is only a language of such Apabhraṃśa or corrupted words. We summarise below the views of

<sup>1</sup> Gauḍabadha, verse 93.

Sanskrit grammarians regarding the origin and expressiveness of such Apabhraṃśa-Prākṛita. The author of the "Saṃgraha" (a huge grammar in verse, the authorship of which is ascribed to Vyāḍi) holds that the origin of Apabhraṃśas is to be traced to Sanskrit; they do not form a separate language having independent growth but represent the refined tongue "संस्कृत" in a corrupted form. These mutilations and corruptions of Sanskrit words were given rise to either by natural unfitness or wrong imitations on the part of low class people in pronouncing the correct Sanskrit forms. Imitation, as is well known to all students of comparative philology, played an important part in the formation of language. The untutored people having close intercourse with the cultured community in which Sanskrit was a spoken language, tried to imitate Sanskrit words which they often heard, but could not do so successfully for reasons already mentioned; the inevitable result was that a dialect of perverted forms having their origin in false imitations of Sanskrit had gradually grown up and ultimately obtained widespread popularity among the mass. The expression "अशक्तिजानुकरणम्,"<sup>1</sup> as it occurs in the Vārttika, is explained by Patañjali as referring to the natural incompetence for exact imitations which is generally displayed by females and low class people. He observes that a female uses the form "लृतक" on account of her physical inability to pronounce the correct form "ऋतक".<sup>2</sup> We have already pointed out that Patañjali strongly believes that forms like "gāvi, goṇā, gotā," etc., have all grown as corruptions from the Sanskrit form "gauh"; he also takes notice of such Prākṛita verbal forms

<sup>1</sup> "अशक्तिप्रतिवर्धनः" इति संशयकारोक्तः अपभ्रंशो नाम न कश्चित् स्वतन्त्रो विद्यते । सर्वस्वत्त्वपभ्रंशस्य साधुरेष प्रकृतिः—Panyarāja under Kār. 7. 149 (Vākyaapadīya).

<sup>2</sup> अशक्ता कथाचिद्वाङ्मत्या लृतक इति प्रयोक्तव्ये लृतक इति प्रयुक्तम्.—M. Bhāṣya, Vol. I, p. 19.

as आणपयति, वद्धति, वृद्धति, which have possibly evolved from such corresponding Sanskrit forms as आणापयति, वर्तते, and वर्द्धते. Kātyāyāna<sup>1</sup> says that the enumeration of roots like “भू,” etc., serves to render such Prākṛita verbal forms as आणपयति, etc., incorrect. Many causes were, however, in operation to bring about such corruptions of speech. We have already referred to physical defect, idleness, carelessness, and economisation of labour, as causes that were at work in transforming a language to such a degraded form. Some Sanskrit words which might have been easily pronounced and properly imitated are to be found in Prākṛita without any formal distortions. These are instances of so-called “तत्सम” class of Prākṛita. Some again, on the other hand, have undergone such a high degree of corruption that they baffle all attempts to find out the original Sanskrit forms of which they are wrong imitations. These belong to the “देशी” class of Prākṛita.

As regards the expressiveness of these Apabhraṃśas, Patañjali<sup>2</sup> says that though meanings are equally expressed by correct and incorrect words (Apabhraṃśas), it is the use of correct words alone that is attended with religious merits. In the opinion of Bhartrihari<sup>3</sup> Apabhraṃśas are not significant by themselves, but their apparent expressiveness depends on the inference of correct forms. What he likes to impress is, that to a learned Brahmin who has Sanskrit as his mother tongue, an Apabhraṃśa word may convey the intended sense only by reminding him of the correct Sanskrit form of which it is a corruption. He continues further that if the Apabhraṃśas were as directly significant as ‘साधुशब्द’<sup>4</sup>s, they might have been used as synonyms of correct words by lexicographers. But this is far from being the actual state of

<sup>1</sup> भूवादिपाठः प्रातिपदिकाण्यत्यादिनिष्ठव्यर्थः 12. M. Bhāṣhy., Vol. I, p. 259.

<sup>2</sup> समानाश्रयार्थावगती शब्देनापशब्द न, etc., M. Bhāṣhya, Vol. I, p. 8.

<sup>3</sup> ते साधुशब्दज्ञानेन प्रत्ययोत्पत्तिरित्यतः—Vākyapadīya. Kar., 1. 151, p. 59.

things. It is to be, however, taken into account that words like *gāvi*, *goṇā*, etc., are not absolutely incorrect in form, since they are found to be correct when used in a sense other than that of "cow." Having shown the importance and indispensability of the principles of grammar for the purpose of discriminating correct words from incorrect words, the Mīmāṃsakas have at last taken up the question as to how meanings are denoted by corrupted forms. Consistently with the grammarians, they<sup>1</sup> attribute the origin of verbal corruptions to the natural inability of pronouncing the correct Sanskrit forms, and hold that correct words are alone directly expressive of sense. The denotations that are found to be associated with corrupted words are essentially indirect and not at all innate as in the case of correct Sanskrit words. The corrupted forms or Apabhraṃśas acquire their denotative potency only by their similarity with corresponding Sanskrit words. Gaṅgeśa<sup>2</sup> has discussed this point with more thoroughness. In conformity with the usual method of the Hindu philosophers, he first puts the arguments in support of the direct expressiveness of the Apabhraṃśas. The corrupted words have expressiveness (शक्ति), as meanings are regularly denoted by them. There is no justification for holding them to be indicative, as opposed to denotative, since there is no inconsistency with their primary significance. It is not plausible that they (Apabhraṃśas) appear to be significant only by recalling the correct forms which are alone denotative, because uneducated people, thoroughly unacquainted with Sanskrit, are also found to derive meanings from such Apabhraṃśas. As there is no logical ground, we are not

<sup>1</sup> तदशक्तियतदनुपपत्त्यात्, Mīm. Sūtra. 1.3.28.

<sup>2</sup> See Tattva Chintāmaṇi, Śabda Kāṇḍa, p. 627. Com. 'ते साधुष्वनुमानेन प्रत्ययोत्पत्तिहेतवः'—Vākya-pādiya. Kār. 1. 151, and असाधुष्वनुमानेन वाचकः कश्चिद्व्यति, —Vāk., 3.30, p. 110.

allowed to assume that their significance is due to their imposed expressiveness. In this way Gaṅgeśa puts forward a series of arguments which are finally rejected by him. In conclusion he says that though in ordinary usage both correct and corrupted words seem to be equally expressive of sense, it is more logical to impose expressiveness upon correct words alone, which are, according to the Naiyāyikas, related to meanings by "Sāṅketa" (volition of God, as expressed in these terms— "Let this word be denotative of this sense"). As it involves nothing but redundancy to hold both correct and corrupted forms equally expressive of sense, Gaṅgeśa takes 'साधुशब्द' to be expressive (शक्त), and says that the apparent expressiveness or denotative potency of corrupted words is only imposed or falsely attributed ("अपस्तु शक्तत्वञ्चमः").













